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The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

Out of sight, out of mind... Cairo's street children: A question of agency and justice

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women's Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts in Gender and Women's Studies  
in Middle East/ North Africa

Specialization in Gender and Justice

by Shirley Wang

under the supervision of Dr. Martina Rieker  
May 2013

The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

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A Thesis submitted by

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to all the children who I have had a profound privilege of working with in California, India and Egypt; and to my mother, Leh M. Wang. Without her unconditional support, encouragement and love I would not be to achieve or excel in my life.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

Out of sight, out of mind... Cairo's street children:

A question of agency and justice

Shirley Wang

The American University in Cairo

under the supervision of Dr. Martina Rieker

This thesis explores how the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) is translated into Egypt's national law and examines the practical applications of the law via programs and services provided by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) when tackling the street child phenomenon.

The first part of this thesis is focused on critically examining the theoretical and philosophical implications of the construction of the "child" and "adult", and its subsequent effects on the regulation of the human body, agency and contemporary justice. The usage of language is important as it is closely linked with the contemporary notion of justice in relation to the CRC. By deconstructing the terms "child" and "adult", I try to complicate and challenge the ways in which we understand the dichotomy and how we engage with these labels. I argue that the current theoretical and philosophical implications of child and adult as elaborated in the CRC perpetuate negative repercussions on the concept of justice, while simultaneously paving way for programs and services that both perpetuate and defy the child-adult dichotomy.

The second part of this thesis examines how the CRC has been implemented into practice via NGOs in Egypt when dealing with street children. Although there are many NGOs working in Egypt, I have chosen to engage with Plan Egypt. The focus of my analyses is on the methods and implications of projects and services provided and the differences in the treatment and availability of programs for street girls and boys. Through observations and interviews, I explore how the organization both contribute and defy the contemporary manifestation of justice in relation to the State and law.

Lastly, through this analytical engagement, I try and understand the current function and role of contemporary justice, as manifested in both State legislation and in programs and services offered by Plan Egypt when addressing street children. By examining pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup> online published news articles, I argue that although these frameworks allow street children some room for agency. However, the ultimate outcome of contemporary justice goes beyond the perpetuation of the child-adult dichotomy and into the realms of governmentality and biopolitics of all individuals.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: CAIRO'S STREET CHILDREN, LIVING IN THE SHADOWS**

On any given day of the week, it is common to find the streets of Cairo overflowing with traffic. The visual of chaotically arranged scooters, automobiles, and minibuses cram the roads while trickling groups of people weave in and out of the traffic to get to their next destination. Next to the jammed streets it is common to see Egyptians and foreigners walking around or crowded together in various outdoor cafes sipping on a cup of coffee or tea and smoking shisha. Whether they maneuver from vehicle to vehicle, or walk to and from each café table in commonly crowded areas such as Zamalek and Downtown, the presence of street children can often be sighted in the midst of chaos.

Some children are dressed in clean clothing, others in dusty or tattered cloths. Some wear shoes whereas others are barefoot. Some move from one driver side window to another, others from table to table selling various products like boxes of Kleenex, flowers, or newspapers, others simply point at their mouths before sticking their hands out. They are all hoping to collect some pocket change from the circulation of people. Some people respond by making light conversation asking general questions in Arabic such as, “What is your name?” and “How old are you?” Others simply ignore their presence or shoo them away. On occasion some people purchase their goods, either negotiating or accepting the price. And then there are those who simply give them a couple of Egyptian pounds before the street child hustles along to the next person. A sighting of the same street child is possible. She or he may be dressed in the same clothing as they continue to navigate through the endless movement of people either selling or begging for money. Sometimes the street child leaves and after a duration, returns back to hers or his routine. But most of the time the street child simply disappears leaving behind a trail of invisible footprints.

Where are their parents? Where do they come from? Where do they go? How long have they been in the streets? Why are they there? Who are these children? These are only some of the initial questions that circulate. Upon further contemplation, broader inquiries regarding the role of society and institutions such as the State and nongovernmental organizations emerge. How does society view and interact with street children? Does it differ when the child is a girl or boy? Are there available programs or services for street children? What do programs and services allow street children to acquire? Is it basic necessities such as shelter and food? What about access to healthcare or education? What exactly is the role of society and institutions; what do they suggest about how street children are viewed? Are they accepted or stigmatized individuals within society? Additionally, how might these roles impact the way justice is understood, defined, and implemented? Even before the rise of these questions, one might start by questioning the terms used, who exactly is a street child? What is the street? What is a child?

Before examining the term “street child”, it is important to first understand what is meant when one uses the terms “child” and “adult”. By differentiating a person as being either a child or adult suggests a very particular frame of understanding. Within the international legal framework, as the only document ratified by all States except the United States and Somalia, the United Nation’s (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) is a rights-based discourse predominantly influenced by Western philosophy. It elaborates on the rights of the child and on the duties of the family, State, and its institutions to ensure the well-being of the child. According to the CRC (1989), a child is defined as any person younger than 18 years of age (Art. 1) who requires the protection and caregiving of adults – either via parents, legal guardians, or the State to ensure proper development into an adult. From this definition, a child is seen as an entity whose innocence and well-being must be protected in order to pave way for

proper development into adulthood in which the individual is then able to take full responsibility of her/his actions and be able to contribute to society (Hart, 1991; Melton, 2008). From this perspective the child and adult dichotomy become important, as it suggests a kind of duty that one has over the other; the adult, if she or he is understood to be a fully developed *being*, has to somehow exert hers or his power – in its various formats (e.g. protecting, caregiving, educating, etc.), over the child that is still in the process of *becoming* so that the child may properly develop into the adult. This way the cyclical process may continue.

Additionally, to understand the relationship between a child and adult as one that requires nurturing and protection, also suggests that one is more susceptible to harm than the other. Thus the notion of vulnerability paves way to the necessity and importance of being monitored, governed and regulated through various institutions such as nongovernmental organizations, healthcare, and education, in order to ensure proper development. However, to conceive the child simply as vulnerable is to neglect the child's active role and decision-making process in hers or his own life, or in other words, to neglect the child's agency.

If one understands the relationship between the child and adult as a process of becoming where the child requires the protection and guidance of parents, legal guardians or the State to ensure proper development, then the concept of street child becomes problematic. According to the UNHRC's annual report, the term "street child," was developed in the 1980s to describe:

"[A]ny girl or boy [...] for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults. [...] "Street children" were categorized as either children *on* the street, who worked on the street and went home to their families at night; children *of* the street, who lived on the street, were functionally without family support but maintained family links; or abandoned children who lived completely on their own." (2012: 4; emphasis original)

In each of the three categories of "street children," whether as children *on* the street, children *of*

the street or as abandoned children, the child is described in reference to “responsible adults”. By associating the street child with the lack of protection, supervision and direction of a responsible adult, the UN neglects to consider the child’s agency. It assumes that a child who ends up in the street is there as a subsequent effect of some cause and not by personal choice. This is not to say that the assumption does not hold some truth, however, it is also important to note the child’s reasoning and agency for choosing to be in the streets.

What are some of the reasons that a child might choose to be in the streets in Egypt? There are various factors that contribute to the existence of street children in Egypt. For instance, Baron (2007) highlights historical accounts of the emergence of orphans and abandoned children in modern Egypt. He suggests that in Islamic writings, orphans are said to deserve special protection whereas abandoned babies are seen anathema in Middle Eastern societies, evoking shame and not sympathy (2007: 13). He also highlights that inheritance law emphasizes and reiterates that the concept of family is defined by bloodlines, thus setting parameters for the care of orphaned versus abandoned children. The legal definitions of an orphan was one who had lost a father, hers or his legal guardian, whereas abandoned children were generally foundlings who were assumed to be the result of illicit sexual relations. Legally this meant that they could not be considered orphans, as their father had not yet died while the woman was considered to have disgraced the family, leaving the child to bare the shame of the act itself. The act of adoption becomes problematic, since inheritance law specifies and suggests that the family unit is one rooted in the bloodline, making “contamination” from others unacceptable and shameful. Thus, the emergence of street children in Egypt, historically speaking, was believed to be rooted in the abandonment of children conceived out of wedlock, which became an increasing problem during the late 1900s in the colonial state when they became suspected of criminality as laws were

passed for dealing with these abandoned children in 1908 (Baron, 2007).

Over the years, however, as the number of street children in Egypt continued to rise, other factors had to be taken into consideration. As suggested by Bibars (2009), poverty is one of the contributing causes to the increase in street children in Egypt. The rise in poverty has inevitability contributed to the rise in familial tension and has led to the break up of families, which are often associated with domestic violence. Consequently, a large number of children ran away from home and into the streets as a means of escape. Other factors include the decline of the standard of education as suggested by Azer (1993). With an increase in students but a stagnant flow of resources and funds, the quality of education inevitably deteriorated (Bibars, 2009). In order to further understand the phenomenon and increasing numbers of street children, various organizations began to open up orphanages or create programs as a means to alleviate the problem. These organizations include, but are not limited to, Hope Village Society, Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), Caritas, Save the Children, and Plan Egypt.

One common method that NGOs use to try and alleviate street children is their focus on education, which serves a variety of functions. On one hand, education can, as suggested by Al-Dien (2009), become a very effective way of supporting street children, as it occurs at the locations of where they live and involves helping them to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of need. As a result, NGOs such as Hope Village Society (2012), Caritas (2012), and Plan Egypt (2012) have initiated community based-education programs that provide non-formal education (NFM) ventures that concentrate on each participant's true needs.

Similarly, as suggested by McCarney, "street kids are bankable, credit worthy and entrepreneurial" as they are considered successful survivors of the harshest economic conditions

(2002: 2). In this sense, educating them on ways of developing entrepreneurship skills allows society to incorporate street children back into the society in an economically beneficial way – so that they become positive contributing producers and consumers of society, rather than consumers and producers of burden. Currently, some economically oriented programs provided by NGOs such as Plan Egypt (2012), CEOSS (2012), Caritas (2012), and Save the Children (2012) include community-based rehabilitation, community learning, and village saving and loans. These programs, although geared more specifically to a family and community based understanding will ultimately also, affect the child. Programs, such as those provided by Plan Egypt (2013), are geared specifically to children include integration, child media, and child protection. The objectives of these programs seek to prevent children from becoming street children, but for those who are already considered to be street children, the programs seek a way to reintegrate them back into society.

In Egypt, despite the wide range of organizational engagements with the street children, unchanging and harsh economic and social realities, as well as the availability and limited access to various types of resources, continues to hinder the full inclusion of street children within the larger society. Their lack of inclusion and the lack of engagement with the government in readdressing current legal positions on say, inheritance laws and the distinctions and stigmas of orphans versus foundlings continue to leave street children at high risk for other types of complications like labor exploitation, prostitution, the use of alcohol and illicit drugs, and health risks. Although various services are being provided, there are also other problematic hindrances that further perpetuate the street child. For instance, social stigma and criminalization of street children hinder a systematic education and complete inclusion and acceptance into society. For instance, during the pre- and post-January 25, 2011 period, street children were present in Tahrir

Square. As reported by various English print newspaper agencies in the region, such as but not limited to, Ahram Online, Al Jazeera, Egypt Independent, and Daily News Egypt, street children were often criminalized and unlawfully detained. Ironically, these hindrances also contribute to the types of services provided which becomes somewhat of a vicious cycle.

## **Methodology**

The first part of this thesis is focused on critically examining the theoretical and philosophical implications of the construction of the “child” and “adult” and its subsequent effects on the regulation of the human body, agency and contemporary justice. The usage of language in describing the dichotomy is important as it is closely linked with the contemporary notion of justice in relation to the CRC. As previously stated, the child-adult dichotomy assumes that the child is vulnerable and would therefore, require the protection, supervision and direction of the adult. By deconstructing the terms “child” and “adult”, I try to complicate and challenge the ways in which we understand the dichotomy and how we engage with these labels. I argue that although children may be vulnerable to certain circumstances, it is wrong to assume that all children, at all times are vulnerable. By accepting the assumption of vulnerability, one neglects to take into account that children are also decision makers. This is especially the case when engaging with street children.

The second part of this thesis is focused on the types of services and programs provided by NGOs in Egypt. Although there are many NGOs in Egypt work with street children, I specifically chose to engage with Plan Egypt and its Street Children Program in Cairo. Operating as a branch of Plan International, Plan Egypt (2013) has been a functioning organization since 1981. Unlike other NGOs such as Caritas and CEOSS, Plan Egypt (2013) operates under no



religious or governmental affiliations. Instead, it specially abides by and upholds children's rights policies as specified by the CRC. Since there are no other affiliations except the CRC, it is worthwhile to examine how Plan Egypt implements the rights elaborated in the CRC. It is important to note here that all programs and services provided by Plan Egypt (2013) focus on the street child's integration into society. Integration policies, especially with respect to street children, may be problematic as it assumes that the best possible scenario for a child is to be embedded within the society at large. The assumption here neglects to take into consideration that some street children choose to live in the streets for different reasons such as freedom from familial and societal pressures and norms. Interviews with women who were once street children as well as with social workers confirm the controversial nature of integration programs. Additionally, they also bring up other questions such as, what is the role or function of the streets?

In addition to the integration programs, I examine the organization's interactions with street children at two main sites, the El-Malek El-Saleh Reception Center (MSRC) located near Manial and the Banati Shelter (BaS) located in 6<sup>th</sup> October City. Additionally, I recorded observations of the facilities, architectural structures, interactions between and amongst street children and adults, and the appearance and behaviors of the children and Plan Egypt personnel. Interactions amongst the street children and those between street children and adults are important to note as they shed light as to the types of relationships established. The architectural and physical appearance of the two facilities also suggest a need to take a closer examination at whether or not the construction of the physical space is deliberate for purposes of surveillance and governance.

A total of 6 in depth interviews were conducted with administrative employers, social

workers, and women who were once street children who either continue or discontinue to live in the streets, and one street child – with the consent and presence of her mother during the interview. Interviews were conducted between the months of December 2012 and January 2013 and lasted approximately 45-90 minutes. Interviews conducted at the MSRC were only geared toward women who were once street children who either continue or discontinued to live in the streets and one street child. All questions asked were the same for all three participants and were previously approved by Plan Egypt personnel. The questions asked focused on understanding how or why the women ended up in the streets, the total time spent in the streets, experiences they encountered in the streets such as drug usage and violence, and what they wish to achieve in the future. The aim of the questions is to identify whether or not agency plays a role in any of their experiences.

It is worthwhile to note here that five of the six in depth interviews conducted were with women as the female to male ratio for both the social workers and street children were disproportionally uneven. During my observations, there were more female individuals than male. For instance, at the MSRC I witnessed a total of three or four boys who were approximately between the ages of 4-7. The girl to boy ratio was rather All social workers that I saw but did not have the opportunity to interview were also women. From my observations, the female to male workers ratio was the same at BaS. All social workers I interviewed and greeted were women with the exception of the shelter overseer - the only man that I was able to interview. However, at the time of the interview, when I asked for records of the total number of girls and boys who were currently staying at the BaS, the recorded ratio of girls to boys was about four to three. With an uneven observed ratio of female to male interviewees and observed participants, it is not only important to ask whether or not programs and services provided are

effective, but also, what does the disproportionality suggest about the focus of the organization when both social workers and street children receiving services are female? Where are the male street children? Are there other organizations in Cairo that work specifically with male street children? What does the gender discrepancy imply about regulation of bodies and justice?

All observations and interviews are geared toward obtaining a better understanding of how street children experienced life prior to and after living in the streets as well as whether or not they played an active role in decision making. Similarly, all documentations of Plan Egypt personnel and facilities seek to better understand how the specified rights of the CRC are implemented on a national level. Questions asked center on whether or not the implementations of the CRC are effective in alleviating the street child phenomenon, the subsequent effects of these implementation methods when it comes to gender and justice, and the subsequent effects of the implications and assumptions of using an integration policy.

## **Chapter Outline**

In Chapter One, I give a brief historical overview of the emergence and existence of street children in Egypt, outlining how various social conditions and institutions such as the family, economic instability, rise in the cost of living, and the judicial system have contributed to the street child phenomenon. In the following chapters, I have chosen to critically analyze some of the implications of how these perceptions create and perpetuate negative repercussions on the concept of justice, while simultaneously paving way for programs and services that both perpetuate and defy the child-adult dichotomy.

In Chapter Two, drawing on Butler's methodology in *Gender Trouble* (1989) in deconstructing gender, I analyze the historical concept of the "child" in relation to the "adult". I

highlight some of the issues surrounding economic contribution, education and self-sustainability within the social context. Following which I invite others to examine the usage of language by asking what does it mean to categorize a human being as a “child” versus an “adult”, and how this dichotomous categorization affects contemporary justice when it comes to rights and agency. By deconstructing the terms “child” and “adult”, I wish to expose how contemporary rights-based discourse of justice regulates the body, and how this regulation is counterproductive and detrimental to the well-being of the subjects it seeks to protect. Alternatively, I will explore a discourse focused on reconceptualizing the “child” and “adult” as equal human beings who both experience and are shaped by their experiences. The alternative discourse suggests that both are fully capable of making right and wrong choices and therefore, should be active agents in maintaining their well-being.

In Chapter Three, I examine how the contemporary concept of justice is understood, defined and implemented when it comes to addressing the concept of the “child”. Drawing on the international human rights framework, I examine the evolution of children’s rights legislation vis-à-vis the CRC and its implications and its integration into the Egyptian national law via the 1995 Child Law and its 2008 Amendments. The focus is on the manifestation of justice vis-à-vis the State and law. Rooted in a rights-based discourse, the CRC perpetuates the child-adult dichotomy and as such, it views the child as an incomplete being, one that needs to be regulated accordingly by the adult, so that she or he is capable of developing into a complete being – the adult.

In Chapter Four, the various ways NGOs in Egypt have interacted with street children via projects and services from the past till present are highlighted. The focus of this chapter is given to the methods and implications of projects and services provided by Plan Egypt. Through

observations and interviews, I aim to elucidate how the organization both contribute and defy the contemporary manifestation of justice in relation to the State and law, and how they play a more active role in allowing the street child agency in hers or his own well-being and future. I examine differences in the treatment and availability of programs for street girls and boys.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I synthesize the previous chapters to try and understand the current function and role of contemporary justice, as manifested in both State legislation and in programs and services offered by Plan Egypt when addressing street children. Examining pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup> online published news articles, I argue that although these frameworks allow street children some room for agency, the ultimate outcome of contemporary justice goes beyond the perpetuation of the child-adult dichotomy and into the realms of governmentality and biopolitics of all individuals.

## **CHAPTER TWO: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE "CHILD" AND "ADULT"**

As briefly stated in the previous chapter, the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) outlines basic human rights that children everywhere are entitled to have: "the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life" (UNICEF, 2008). Since Egypt was one of the first ten nations to become signatory to the CRC, and also the first nation to adapt the CRC into its domestic legislation (The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, 2013) via the Child Law of 1995 and the 2008 Amendments, it is therefore important to examine the implications of these legislation with respect to the street child.

If the United Nations is already invested in protecting human rights, then why is there a need to draw upon another document such as the CRC to specify the rights of children? Are children not human? Within the existing literature, some scholars have suggested that the rights of children differ from human rights in that children are not autonomous individuals and thus require the supervision and guidance of adults and/or other guardians, and are dependent on such people for economic, work, and education (Bessell and Gal, 2009; Carvalho, 2008; Hart, 1991). Children are seen as incapable of taking care of themselves and are, therefore, not entitled to the same rights as capable human beings, otherwise termed adults. For instance, the right to marriage is only available to "men and women of full age" (UDHR, 2013, Art. 16(1) and the right to choose what kind of education is reserved to parents (UDHR, 2013, Art. 26(3)). Although the majority of rights specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights do not specify age, the

CRC grants all decision-making processes to parents or legal guardians, and in their absence, the right to make decisions is given to the state (CRC, 1989, Preamble, Art. 1, 2 and 3). Rights are then reserved for those who are not only capable of taking care of themselves, but those who are also responsible for the protection and welfare of children, the adults.

The main question here seems to be one of *becoming*. When and how does an individual become an autonomous adult? Also stemming from this understanding is the idea that children are innocent and through socialization become either a responsible or irresponsible, and moral or immoral adult within society, and thus subject to the full extent of the law. But what are the limitations of viewing the relationship between the child and adult as one of *becoming*? Is the ‘adult being’ a fully capable being that remains static in her or his views thereby able to engage in thoughtful and or rational decision-making?

Drawing on Butler’s methodology in *Gender Trouble* (1989) that aims at deconstructing gender, I analyze the historical concept of “child”. I highlight some of the issues surrounding economic contribution, education and self-sustainability within the social context. Following which I invite others to examine the usage of language. What does it mean to say that one is a ‘child’ versus ‘adult’? By asking this question I aim to challenge the preconceived notions of associating adulthood with age, mentality or capabilities of the individual as reference to the capabilities of the individual, would also suggest a need for a measurement tool or indication. One might then ask, by what standards or indicators are they being measured by? What are the implications and limitations in working through such categories? What underlying assumptions are being made when one uses terms like ‘child,’ ‘adult,’ ‘childhood,’ and ‘adulthood’? What does this suggest about contemporary human rights and rights-based discourses? What do these assumptions and limitations imply about rights-based discourse and justice and what are its

affects on an individual's agency? Furthermore, when it comes to other members of society, such as street children, do the same limitations and assumptions apply?

## **An Overview of Children's Rights**

The foundation of the concept of human rights is rooted in universalism, which suggests a comprehensive understanding and acknowledgement of the natural, inherent and inalienable rights human beings are entitled to that emanate from the intrinsic properties of persons (Hart, 1991), but with minimal consideration to social and economic inequalities that one is born into. Similarly, children's rights are based on the "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human *family*" (Melton, 2008: 903, emphasis added). In other words, children's rights, which are based on foundational concepts of human rights, are directed toward a world where mutual respect serves as the guidepost for social order (Melton, 2008). However, one must pay close attention to the wording used, "members of the human *family*" (CRC, 1989). Children's rights are therefore, not entirely rooted in the perspective or subject-positioning of children, but rather, they are demarcated by adults through a balance between protection and choice (Hart, 1991; Melton, 2008). In other words, the rights that are drawn up in the CRC were not based on asking children what they believe their rights should consist of, but rather rights that adults believed children needed in order to develop. As such, the role of the child is understood as vulnerable and would require the supervision of a responsible adult. But how did we arrive at such a formulation of children's rights?

Contemporary conceptions of the child and of childhood are relatively new. Prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, children beyond the age of six were considered "small adults". The expectations and rights of the child were contingent on their competencies, and parental control over their



children was unlimited as parents could ignore, abandon, abuse, sell and mutilate their children. Some historians attribute this to the dangers and discomforts of child-bearing due to the lack of knowledge in sexual and overall health education (Hart, 1991: 53). In Europe, views of children as such shifted between the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries with the emergence of property status, during which children acquired value for contributing to family work and for supporting their parents in old age; here the emphasis was centered on the child's obedience. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with influences from the philosophical works of Hobbes (1985), Locke (1952), and Mills (1963), amongst others, children's status in relation to adults further widened as they were perceived as being vulnerable to conditions of immigration, industrialization and urbanization, thus the "child-saving era" with state and religious intervention into family life (Hart, 1991).

Concepts of the child again shifted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; first, children were seen as human resources in that their mature form would ultimately determine the future of society, which led to child labor reforms and compulsory education and juvenile court systems (Hart, 1991). This new understanding of the child as being "the future of society" fostered the contemporary notion of the child as *becoming* which was followed by an emerging person status viewpoint that led to the justification for the rights to protection and self-determination; a view that was heavily influenced by events in the Second World War (Hart, 1991). Subsequently, through these historical moments, ways of differentiating between the child and adult have been reliant on the delineation of life force into divisions based on arbitrary notions like chronological age, puberty, one's ability to "play", or freedom from labor exploitation which is then inscribed into laws or juridical codes (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006).

Thus, through deductive reasoning, one can come to understand children in the contemporary age as an "incomplete" human being, as they have yet to reach a fully developed

stage or maturation. The perception of the child as an incomplete being is tied to the belief that children are a human resource who requires guidance and protection for proper development and maturation. By viewing the child as such, would then require the creation of a different set of rights since the child her or himself would not have complete control over the decision-making process for her or his development. Instead, it becomes the responsibility, or duty, of the adult to ensure the well-being and proper development of the child. Thus, begging the philosophical question of *becoming*. When does a child *become* an adult and is thereby termed a “human being” with human rights?

### **The Child and the Adult as Human Beings**

Two separate discourses arise; the first discourse argues that children and adults are equal human beings. To understand this, one would have to move away from foundationalist and rights-based ideologies and reconceptualize the child as either a *being* who is situated and actively experiencing and perceiving the world, like that of an adult. Or to think of the child as *being-becoming* in which the child is simultaneously a being – one who experiences and perceives the world, and *becoming* – one whose being is constantly being shaped and reshaped through their experiences of the world. The first discourse differs from the second discourse as it suggests that both the child and the adult are equal human beings that experience and are shaped by their experiences and thus, are both fully capable of making right and wrong choices. The second discourse is rights-based and focuses on contractarian libertarian theory that follows Hobbes and Gauthier in seeing children as in the process of developing and maturing and therefore must have limited rights as they are not yet, fully competent rational agents (Shapshay, 2008).

### *The Child as a “being”*

One proponent for children’s rights is Janusz Korczak (1992a) a pediatrician and pedagogue whose research and writings prior and during the Second World War have influenced the 1989 United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (Eichsteller, 2009). Korczak strongly believed that children ought to be seen as worthy persons and valued for what they are, rather than what they were perceived not to be. His work was influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Emile*, published in 1762; Sigmund Freud’s innovative thoughts on psychoanalysis and emphasis on the significance of early childhood experiences, and Maria Montessori’s and John Dewey’s theories on the appreciation of the childhood years of development (Eichsteller, 2009). In his 1919 publication of *How to Love a Child*, Korczak’s key theses were focused on seeing the child as she or he is; in other words, in order to love a child, one has to “see her or him to be” (Freeman, 1996: 31 cited in Eichsteller, 2009: 382). This notion coincided with Pestalozzi’s idea that children need love, and that they develop in accordance with their own nature similarly to that of an adult (Eichsteller, 2009); therefore, the individuality of the child ought to be fostered by treating the child as one would treat an adult, and by allowing the child to experience and learn from that experience. “There are thoughts that can be born only of your own pain, and precisely those are the most precious ones” (Korczak, 1967: 94; Lifton, 1988: 42, Eichsteller, 2009: 381).

Korczak’s work is of particular interest, as he did not view children as needing to become an autonomous individual or an ‘adult’ in order to experience the full extent of human rights, but rather, he believed that children were already autonomous individuals who only needed the opportunity to engage in autonomous actions and who needed to be treated as such. In order to put his theory into practice, Korczak (1967; 1992a,) established a radical pedagogical approach

that involved children's active participation. He believed that self-governing structures would ensure the basis of a discourse between the child and adult that is independent from the adult's humanistic attitude, in other words, children were right-owners and could be certain to enforce any violation of their rights when their opinions are acknowledged and respected (Eichsteller, 2009). Utilizing his orphanage, *Dom Sierot*, Korczak created a Children's Republic in which the children became the "patron, the worker, and the head of the home" (Lifton, 1988: 70; Eichsteller, 2009: 382-383).

Three institutions ran the Children's Republic: the Children's Court, Children's Parliament, and Children's Newspaper. The Children's Court consisted of five child judges that were elected weekly by other children. Their main function was to maintain law and order and to establish an environment where staff did not have to enforce obedience through physical force or shouts, but instead through dialogue and decision-making processes (Eichsteller, 2009). The Children's Parliament functioned as the legislative power in which children grouped into fives to elect one 'Member of Parliament' in order to make general decisions about the home, and passed or amended rules that were set up by the Children's Court (Ungermann, 2006 cited in Eichsteller, 2009). Lastly the Children's Newspaper functioned as a way to 'defend children' (Korczak, cited in Lifton, 1988: 173, cited in Eichsteller, 2009: 385) while also serving as a forum for children to voice their opinions and concerns. The newspaper also served two other functions, first, as a reflection and means of situating oneself in history, and, second, the newspaper served as insight into how the children thought, processed and engaged with information. What Korczak discovered through the establishment of the Children's Republic was that children were more than capable of self-governing and of resolving conflict amongst themselves via the means of the Court and Parliament. "Children do not become human beings, they already are" (Eichsteller,

2009: 384), and by conceptualizing children as human *beings*, rather than human *becomings* (Qvortrup, 2005), Korczak concluded that children were entitled to individual rights. For Korczak, children's rights meant the respect of children's experiences, differences, individuality and their being as a child (Eichsteller, 2009), from which he formulated three key rights: (1) the right of the child to die, (2) the right of the child to live for today, and (3) the right of the child to be what she or he is (Eichsteller, 2009).

For Korczak, the right of the child to die meant that a child (and any individual) has the right to take responsibility for their own life and death; in other words, parents are often too overprotective of their children by taking the stance of "in the best interests of the child..." which often translates into a disregard for the child's right to freedom, self-experience and self-determination through various types of regulation. Korczak (1992a) concludes that children need to take risks in order to gain experience and learn, and that adults need to have confidence in the child's self-determination through respect. Pedagogues in turn, need to know the individual child in order to assess where to set boundaries (Eichsteller, 2009). Korczak's second right, the right to live for today, emphasizes that "today's learning is important for tomorrow" where the pedagogue's task is "not to influence the future fate of the child, but to ensure that the present day is 'full of happy efforts, child-like, carefree without responsibility that exceeds the age and the power'" (Korczak, 2004: 250 as cited in Eichsteller, 2009). Lastly, Korczak's final right, the right to be oneself, implies that the child should not be burdened with exaggerated ideals, but should enjoy free opportunities for development, to one's own identity chosen by the child not *for* the child (which goes beyond the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Child's notion of identity), and includes *being* the person that the child is (Eichsteller, 2009: 387f). These rights, amongst others highlighted by Korczak, like the child's rights to respect, were focused on

viewing the child as an autonomous human being with the capability and full capacity to make decisions accordingly. He argued that respecting a child and allowing children to have the same rights as those delegated to adults as such was not a “philanthropic act”, but necessary in order to unite and equip people with the means to live in harmony with each other (Eichsteller, 2009).

Similarly, Freeman (2007) argues that rights are important, because they are inclusive and therefore universal – available to all members of the human race. Drawing on various advocates and critics of children’s rights, Freeman (2007) suggests that, in addition to the view that children are not yet autonomous beings, the current refusal to fully extend human rights to children rests on the myth that childhood is the golden age, one that is innocent, untainted from the complexities of adulthood. Thus, rights should be reserved to the parents or legal guardians that are responsible for children, as they are riddled with “adulthood” complexities. Rights become an important advocacy tool, a weapon that can be employed in battle in order to secure recognition. Those who have rights would also possess agency, the ability for one to participate in the negotiation and alterations of social assumptions and constraints. The underlying assumption is the view that childhood is like the golden age, where the objective of the child is to enjoy life. Concerns regarding rights, the privileges that are associated, and the complexities of life should be left to the parents and legal guardians, or the adults. Critics like Goldstein, Freud and Solnit (1996), Guggenheim (2005), and O’Neill (1988), argue that human rights should be reserved for parents as they are the primarily caretakers and protectors of children. In other words, they argue for parents’ rights as opposed to children’s rights under the premise that if we care about children’s lives, then we should identify the obligations that parents, teachers, and society have towards children (O’Neill, 1988). Children would then have “the right ‘to be raised by parents who are minimally fit and who are unlikely to make significant mistakes in judgments

in childrearing” (Guggenheim, 2005: 43). Although these arguments may seem flawlessly valid, Freeman (2007) suggests that viewing childhood in this light negates the child’s social, economic and legal experiences, as well as their ability to comprehend both rational and irrational decisions. Melton (2008) further expands by suggesting that, although contemporary views acknowledge children’s situated-ness and individual-ness, children’s rights are based on conditions of balancing are contingent on arguments of competency. To put it differently, although children are understood to have their own thoughts and ideas of the world around them, it is somehow insufficient due to the lack of life experience and knowledge, which is often contributed to a person’s age. Ultimately, what this implies, is that age is somehow synonymous to life experience and knowledge, and these characteristics alone, would allow one to have better judgment.

Critics of children’s rights like Beauchamp and Childress (2001, cited in Freeman, 2007) focus on the capacity of the person regarding levels of competence. They contend that children are not qualified to have rights due to their inabilities to: “evidence a preference or a choice, to understand one’s situation or relevantly similar situations, to understand disclosed information, to give a reason, to give a rational reason, to give reasons where risk and benefit have been weighed, or to reach a reasonable decision, as judged, for example by a personal standard” (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001 as cited in Freeman, 2007: 12). Their lack of competence again implies that adults, who are seen as competent individuals, must be guaranteed rights, but the ratification of international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, suggest contemporary acknowledgment that children must have rights of their own, so long as they do not impede the rights of adults:

“...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the *human family* is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world... the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance, Convinced that the *family*, as the *fundamental group of society* and natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community...” (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, Preamble; emphasis added).

In contemporary discourse, children are entitled to certain rights, but the reinforcement and responsibility that these entitlements are applied and delivered rests on the parents or legal guardians. When they fail, it becomes the responsibility of the nation-state, which suggests that all positions are reserved for the adult. Therefore grant adults the protection and ability to exercise rights without reservations. As such, both Freeman (2001) and Melton (2008) argue that children are still not seen as capable human beings, but instead they are *becomings* who are entitled to rights of protection, supervision and assistance under adults in which other proponents of children’s rights Brennan (2002), Arneil (2002), and others would argue views children as merely one *becoming* rather than as a *being* (cited in Eichsteller, 2009).

### *The Child as ‘being-becoming’*

While reexamining the modern discourse of human rights, Evans suggests that the hegemonic discourse of legal constructs typically “takes on the form of technical repairs rather than substantive reconsideration or self-questioning of the efficacy” (2004: 1053). In other words, within the hegemonic discourse, there is an underlying tendency to believe “that all the most important human rights standards and norms have been set and that what remains of the project is elaboration and implementation”—a belief, that in effect, “is at the heart of the push to prematurely cut off debate about the political and philosophical roots of nature and of the relevance of human rights corpus” (Mutua, 2004: 55). As such, Tarulli and Skott-Myhre (2006)



argue that rights qua rights are produced within the forms of daily life otherwise termed as “multitude”. From this understanding, child and youth rights are not derived from the confines of law or convention, but instead, from the “ontological surplus that inheres in the lived-experiential relations of force found in the lives of children and youth throughout the world” (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 188).

Contemporary modernist discourse views the child as one of *becoming*. The child goes through various developmental stages before finally arriving at the final category of “adult”. From this perspective, the child adheres to living according to specific degrees of transcendent taxonomic determinations of maturity, age, locality, and gender, therefore certain rights are inherent whereas others must be acquired upon a ‘completion’ or ‘graduation’ of a developmental stage (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006). The basis of childhood as a universal, ahistorical essence and nature of the child thereby removes the child’s situated-ness within the society. By viewing the child as such, one writes the child as a “kind of horizon”. The metaphor implies that the child is both in motion and as a point of instantiated singularity in which the child should be viewed as both being *and* becoming. Tarulli and Skott-Myhre (2006) argue, “such a child is inadequate to the liberatory impetus our [contemporary] dreaming” since the ‘child’ becomes the minoritarian subject that we must all become (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 189). To better understand the child as *being-becoming*, Tarulli and Skott-Myhre (2006) draw on Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of the link between the individual and the social in terms of a series of lines or forces which are grouped into three categories: molar lines, molecular lines, and lines of flight (1987: 189).

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), molar lines are rigid as the function is to contain or capture, in other words, a molar line territorializes, regulates, and fragments space into

value-laden binary oppositions; for instance woman and man, child and adult, private and public (cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 190). On the other hand, molecular lines are much more fluid and flexible and they denote relations and establish connections that go beyond those of the molar structures; they are seen as a complement and supplement to the rigidity, while simultaneously representing potential movement, destabilization and transformation.

Lastly, lines of flight as the phrase suggests, go beyond the territorializing reach of molar structures, they are subject to mutation and release denoting passages away from rigidity or even being representative of breaking points (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987 cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 190). Lines of flight are driven by desire where one leaves the confines of rigidity to recapture, re-territorialize, recode or re-appropriate molar lines. In other words, the issue with children's rights is rooted within the notion that the child is one of *becoming* as it confines and restricts the concepts of 'child' and 'adult' into molar architecture in which the child comes after the adult and the adult must wrestle with desire. Zourabichvili (1996) argues, "to desire, or to renew contact with desire, or to discover lines of flight for desire, in adulthood, would thus be inseparable from becoming-child" (p. 203 cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 191). The child then is "constituted as a subjectivity extracted from chronological time or age as its intensities and productions" (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006), in other words, the contemporary modernist understanding of the child and childhood as a universal and ahistorical entity that becomes an adult through maturation via aging is thus exemplifies a molar line, whilst neglecting the ever changing or *becoming* nature of the child and of the adult through their experiences and desires; thus, the child does not become the adult but rather it is becoming itself, that is, a child. From this stance, the child is seen as a kind of "war machine," a force with power to "deterritorialize sedentary structures... [and] is a disruptor, an agent of becoming and difference

—inherently unstable—operating ceaselessly against identitarianism and wherever it is able to act, a war machine deterritorializes State structures” (Hipwell, 2004: 362 cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 192). Under the notion that a child is a “war machine” that can jeopardize the foundational establishments of the State, the contemporary modernist conception of the child needing to become an adult to experience human rights is therefore justified as this breeds grounds to draw legislation and juridical contracts that bind or constrain the child’s desires to the parent or legal guardian (adult), as if the child itself was a form of property that needs to be structured for ‘proper’ social functionality.

Tarulli and Skott-Myhre (2006) further the argument by proposing an immanentist ethics of creation, emergence and becoming in which one looks at what can be done – participation, through alliance with others, rather than who we (individually or collectively) are; here the focus is not on “I am human, recognize me” but instead on the creation of a “people to come” (Colebrook, 2002 p.99 cited on pg. 193). This creates what Tarulli and Skott-Myhre term “ethics of potentialities” which entail “a positioning of rights as immanent potential, as absolute acts, in which identitarian concerns with the molar, juridical standard of the ‘rights-bearing person’ give way to a concern with the process of situated, particularized, embodied rights creation (2006: 193). The situated act is therefore a resistance struggle in which the means of revealing or disclosing is not enough but rather a means of constituting; in other words, rights become an area of “always yet-to-be-achieved”, always becoming an “other” rather than their codifications; thus, the act which constitutes the force of what a body can do produces a moment of flight but one that is limited within the molar line of the adult to the becoming line of the child (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 193).

In this sense, the view of the child as an entity that is becoming situates the child as a minoritarian subject in which the state of *becomings* (plural) confines the child into a product and therefore, the teleological conception of becoming in early liberal theory (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006). It is through this minoritarian status that the minority, in this case the child, is subjected to the state of power and domination of the majority, or the adult, in which the only means to acquire power within this molar structure, is via inclusion – by “challenging the unthinking assumptions of children’s ‘difference’ and the age-based exclusionary and exploitative practices,” or via recognition – that children should not be regarded as scale model adults but instead take on their own terms as a set of developmental subjects that require a distinctive and particular approach (White, 2002: 1095-1096). As stated by Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 7), “the power of becoming is afforded not in the actualization of an identity (in becoming *something*) but rather in the force of change and movement itself, in the raw capacity to affect and be affected”, in other words, becoming is for its own sake and thus, there is no other apparent object than difference itself. Bogue describes this notion of becoming as “a passage between things, a decoding that proceeds via a mutative interaction with the stigmatized term of a binary relation” (1997: 109). From this stance, becoming a force of change and movement itself, functions as a molecular power, which implicitly recognizes that the ineradicably multiple, un-finalizable nature of existence in which one is a multiplicity and unfinishedness that follow the fluctuations of life itself and it is through the dialogical encounter with other and with situations (e.g. experiences) that open up new horizons of being in the world (Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006). Thus, the child is seen as a *being-becoming* which involves the movement of transformation in which one thing becomes another thing without coming to a definite

resemblance; it is an encounter between multiplicities that create something new rather than being confined to the molar structures of “child” and “adult.

Reinforcing Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) understanding of the relationship between the child and the adult through molar, molecular and lines of flight is Rogers’ (1956) self-ethnographic study in which he poses the question of how one becomes a person by asking how one can provide a relationship in which a person may use for her/his own personal growth (9). Rogers (1956) reflects on his personal experiences as a psychologist and concludes that it’s only through temporal change that one becomes a person. He continues to elaborate that temporal changes mean changes that appear to come about through experience in a relationship and can be broken down into three main phases: the type of relationship established, which will lead to the individual’s ability to discover within herself/himself, the capacity to use the relationship for growth, to the final phase in which change and personal development would occur (Rogers, 1956).

Rogers (1956) elaborates that the type of relationship that ought to be established should be one that is genuine, or the willingness to be, and the ability to express genuineness through words and behavior. It is the act of being genuine that allows the relationship to develop into one of continual desire to understand one another and, through the ability to *understand* the other’s feelings and thoughts, one will arrive at freedom from any type of moral or diagnostic evaluation, and therefore the ability to explore oneself at both conscious and unconscious levels. In doing so, one learns to accept the other as a separate person with value of her/his own right, and through an established empathetic understanding, enables one another to see his private (or personal) world through his own eyes. Rogers (1956) argues that once this is achieved, the individual will enter the second phase in which she/he will discover within her/himself, the

capacity to use this relationship for growth or the drive toward self-actualization in order to expand and extend into a more developed individual before finally entering the final phase in which change and personal development would occur, allowing the individuals to “recognize the conscious and deeper levels of [her or] his personality in order to cope with life more constructively, more intelligently and in a more socialized and satisfying way” (Rogers, 1956: 12).

Roger’s (1956) self-ethnography is important as he questions how one becomes a person, his conclusion suggests that one becomes a person through social interactions, but, more importantly, through engaging in dialogue and empathy with others with the implicit understanding that in order to foster this type of development, a consensus of status equality without discrimination of any kind between both individuals must be established. Similarly, if we apply Rogers (1956) self-ethnography to the children’s rights movement, in order for it to be successful, a child should not be seen as an entity that is to become an adult in order to acquire human rights, but rather that both the child and the adult are equal as being-becoming as previously elaborated through Deleuze and Guattari (1987 cited in Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006). It is argued then, that, through this understanding of the child and the adult as both being-becoming both child and adult will be seen as equals and, are therefore entitled to the same human rights.

### **The Child as an Incomplete Human and the Adult as a Complete Human Being**

The second discourse is rights-based, stemming from the philosophical perspectives of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and various others, who encourage the protection of children and the limitations of their freedom until they reach maturation and *become* an adult

or an autonomous individual who is able to comprehend and take full responsibilities of their actions (Hart, 1991; Shapshay, 2008). From this perspective, adults are considered fully developed and capable beings and thus granted rights, whereas children are in the process of *becoming* an adult and can only be granted limited rights since they are still under the protection and supervision of adults – parents or legal guardians.

### *The Child as ‘becoming’*

Viewing the child as “becoming” is rooted in historical contexts, especially those that prevailed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the notion that children are the future and as such the need for adults to protect and assist children through childhood development becomes fundamental. The key word associated with children is “development” which connotes a state of malleability that is juxtaposed to the “developed” adult that connotes a state of stability. Rights-based discourse is then centered on positive liberty, which suggests that an individual must have personal autonomy, one must be free to act on one’s own intentional choices without being significantly limited by internal or external factors in doing so or to have agency – “internal competency conditions and capabilities such as adequate understanding, volitional control and a certain level of consistency in preferences and plans” (Shapshay, 2008). Since human rights are created via rights-based discourse, it applies only to adults, as they are perceived as ‘developed’ capable beings with agency. Conversely children are perceived as possessing diminished autonomy because they are more susceptible to external influences, like peer pressure, and therefore unstable with short-sighted interests and goals; in addition, because their language and cognitive skills are still developing, it becomes difficult for them to communicate and navigate the conceptual world of adults effectively (Shapshay, 2008; Khoury-Kassabri and Ben-Arieh,

2008). Lastly, since a child's economic, social and medical well-being is also dependent on their parents or legal guardians, they become further viewed as non-agents and as "property" of their parents or legal guardians. This however, does not imply that parents or legal guardians can do as they wish to their children, but rather their responsibility as adults is to provide an environment in which their child can develop hers or his interests and become autonomous.

In deconstructing the terms "child" and "adult", I examined three different ways of understanding the child in relation to the adult: the child as a *being*, the child as a *being-becoming*, and the child as *becoming*. To understand the child as *being* is to view the child and adult as equals. As Korczak's (1992a) argues, it is the belief that children ought to be seen as worthy persons and valued for what they are, rather than what they were perceived not to be. This view implies that both the child and adult are capable of making right and wrong decisions and it is through the learning process that one experiences and develops into what she or he is meant to be. Alongside Korczak's argument is the view of children as *being-becomings*. This view is similar to understanding the child as *being*; however, it goes further in arguing that children and adults are not territorialized entities who are confined to certain attributes and stages in life. One does not graduate from being a child to an adult. Instead, understanding the child as a *being-becoming* requires the acknowledgment of the movement of transformation. In other words, one thing becomes another thing without coming to a definite resemblance as the creation of something new stems from an encounter between multiplicities rather than being confined to molar structures of "child" and "adult. Lastly, the argument to understand the child as *becoming* differs from the previous two concepts as it views the child as a dependent. In this view, the child is not a *being* but rather, she or he is in the process of developing to become a *being*, the adult. In



order for the child to *become* an adult, the process of *becoming* requires guidance and protection from an adult to ensure proper development and protection.

All three views of the child as *being*, *being-becoming*, and *becoming*, shed insight to the types of relationships a child may have with her or himself, as well as with others. Additionally, it also implies varying degrees of agency. By viewing the child as a *being* and *being-becoming* is to suggest that the child plays an active role in hers or his own life, since it is only through the experience of trial and error that a child would learn to become what she or he is. Understanding the child as a *becoming* does not necessarily imply that the child has no agency, however, it is shifting the responsibility and role of agency to adults, as they are perceived to be fully developed. What then, do these understandings of the child, imply about rights and justice?

### **CHAPTER THREE: THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, EGYPT'S CHILD LAW AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON STREET CHILDREN, AGENCY, AND JUSTICE**

Over the past century, various documents beginning, with the League of Nation's Declaration of the Rights of the Child drafted in 1924, followed by a revision in 1959, and, finally, the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989, have attempted to acknowledge and protect the rights of the child. These legislations illustrate the historical shift and the evolution of viewing children first as "small adults", then as property, and, finally, as a person's status. As elaborated in the previous chapter, the CRC, as the current standing framework for children's rights, begs the philosophical question of *becoming*. As the most highly praised international human rights legislation, the CRC is the only document that has been ratified by all States except two, Somalia and the United States. On July 6, 1990 Egypt became the 11<sup>th</sup> State to ratify the CRC and in 1996, the first State to translate and adopt the CRC into its national law. In doing so, Egypt attempted to address the importance of children within the society. However, although the intentions of the Child Law were noble, reinforcing the rights and duties of parents and the State as specified in the legislation was difficult. Furthermore, by adding additional conditions to some of the articles within the CRC, such as allowing only the father to legally register newborns and the prohibition of abortion, rights in the Child Law became restricted and applicable to only certain children and not all.

In order to understand the significance of Egypt's 1996 Child Law in relation to the street child, this chapter will begin with an examination of the main rights related to the street child as defined in the CRC. Since the 1996 Child Law is an adaptation of the CRC, it is important to first examine the origins of those rights and their implications within the international community before delving into their domestic implications. An examination at Egypt's initial

reservations toward all articles that addressed adoption is also worthwhile, especially with respect to the street child. Often times, street children do not have government-issued documents such as a birth certificate. By default, in accordance to the rights addressed in the CRC, the child is considered stateless, and thus a non-recipient of the rights that would have otherwise been applied such as access to education and healthcare services. Thus, Egypt's strict regulations on birth registrations coupled with its reservation against adoption and the lack of alternative care facilities, creates a category of invisible citizens that are comprised primarily of children, one that is useful to examine especially in relation to agency and justice. Although there are other legislations that could also be examined such as the Egyptian Constitution, personal status law, and family and inheritance law, the purpose of this thesis and chapter is not to examine the Egyptian government and its relation to the child. Instead, the objective is to assess the philosophical underpinnings of the child-adult dichotomy and its implications on the greater framework of children's rights as established by the international community via the CRC. Thus the focus is on Egypt's 1996 Child Law and its 2008 Amendments, as these were the first attempts of localizing international human rights law.

### **Convention on the Rights of the Child: Child Agency and Family and State Regulation**

The CRC is the product of two prior declarations from the mid 1920s and late 1950s, the Geneva Declaration of 1924 and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959. Also known as the 1924 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, this declaration highlights only five rights granted to the child. These rights do not include any participatory rights, but instead, rights that mankind owes to the child. For instance, a child must be given material and spiritual support in order to have a normal development, a child's health must also be cared for, a child must be the

first to receive relief in times of distress, a child should be protected from all forms of exploitation, be able to grow and develop in order to earn a livelihood, and a child should be conscious that all talents developed must be devoted to the service of the betterment of others (Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1924). Thus the declaration states the *duties* adults have towards children with the purpose of allowing the child to grow and develop, but with no attention given to the child's choice or voice. From this perspective, the relationship between the child and the adult is not equal, but rather one of dependency, in which the adult is responsible for ensuring the well-being, protection and best interests of the child in order for proper development. As a blatant embodiment of the child-adult dichotomy, where the child is viewed as an incomplete being who's in the process of *becoming* a complete *being*, or the adult, the duties highlighted include: providing material and spiritual needs for the child's development, food and shelter, child-rearing, and protection and assistance where needed, for instance relief in times of distress, and exploitation (NGO Committees on Education, 2010). Thus, in the early stages of children's rights, the child is only seen as *becoming* and, therefore, the protection of her or his parents or legal guardian's rights are elaborated and protected by the international jurisprudence to ensure that the child develops, or *becomes* a capable, autonomous adult to further sustain the cycle of the dichotomy.

Similarly, rooted in the Geneva Declaration of 1924, the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child is an expansion of its predecessor. Included in the document are rights addressed in the previous declaration along with the following additions, the right to an identity (a name and nationality), a free and compulsory education, protection against discriminations of any kind especially those against race and religion, and the addition of a clause that addresses the care of physically, mentally or socially handicapped children (UNHCR, 2010). Even with the additional

clauses, the declaration is similar to its predecessor, as it does not address a child's choice or voice; instead, the declaration is devoted to the protection and nurturance rights of children (Hart, 1991). Therefore it continues to view the child as *becoming*, and highlights the rights of the parents or legal guardians as the child is subjected to the protection of their care.

Unlike its two predecessors where the child-subject had no participatory and autonomy or rights of self-determination, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child holds a dual status within modernity as the child-subject is produced both as a transcendental individual full of agency and accountable within the individuated self of high capital, and as a thoroughly disciplined political subject with "all the social constructions including 'competent authorities,' 'competent supervision,' 'legal guardians,' 'personals legally responsible,' 'national law,' 'family,' and 'family members'" (CRC Articles 1-9; Tarulli and Skott-Myhre, 2006: 187). The balancing of previously addressed protection and nurturance rights along with the new addition of participatory and autonomy rights suggest that children to some extent are being addressed as an autonomous individual. For instance in Article 40, the child is given rights to due process. But this is not to say that the CRC has fully acknowledged children as equals with their adult counterparts. Article 3 best summarizes that although the drafted Convention is making steps toward viewing children as autonomous individuals, the best interests of the child based upon rights and duties specified toward the adult are still being preserved.

Although advocates for self-determination rights of children are favored, the Convention serves as a document that balances protection and choice. Children are given autonomy rights with respect to their age and maturity, to freedom of expression, to freedom of thought, conscious and religion, and access to information (Articles 12-17), some restrictions are established as means to maintain the rights of others as well as to maintain the child's "best

interest” in order to allow the child’s full ability to develop into an autonomous adult with full access to human rights. For instance, Article 13-1 addresses the child’s right to freedom of expression which includes “freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media in the child’s choice”. Restrictions are outlined in 13-2a and 2b, which stipulate that infringement of other’s rights and/or reputation and for the protection of national security or of public order, health or morals are unacceptable. Within the same line of thinking are Articles 14 and 15, which highlight the child’s freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and association. Allowing the child the freedom or room to decide what is best for her or him, the CRC acknowledges and encourages the child’s agency. However, this is not without limitations as in both Articles 14 and 15 the room in which the child is free to explore is still defined by the parents or legal guardians or in conformity with the law.

Protection and nurturance rights from the previous two documents continue to be outlined in the CRC, but with further elaboration. For instance, in Articles 32-35, the child must be protected from economic exploitation, the use and production and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and from sexual exploitation and abuse. Similarly in Articles 23-29 adults and State Parties are obligated to provide children with healthcare, adequate standard of living, and education to ensure a child’s right to develop into an autonomous adult.

Although the CRC has progressed from its predecessors by fusing together previously drawn rights of protection and nurturance with new articles that address the child’s participatory and autonomy rights, the articles still perpetuate the child-adult dichotomy, in that the child is still somehow incomplete when compared to the adult. In doing so, what is drawn in the CRC is a series of moments in which the child’s agency is guided into being a particular way. In other

words, the child is molded or structured into a very particular type of citizen through the course of their development, either by the family or the State. This type of guided child agency is reflected in the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the Preamble,

“Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,  
Realizing that the child, for the full harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding...” (CRC, 1989, Preamble).

By defining the family as the fundamental group of society, the CRC establishes the family as the main or most important unit in bringing up the child. The implication here is that the family unit becomes responsible for the well-being and development of the child. If this is the case, then complications arise when one thinks of these implications in relation to the street child as the question centers on responsibility. As suggested in Article 18, parents or legal guardians must be aware of their responsibility and duty towards the upbringing and development of the child. In the absence of parents or the abuse of these responsibilities, State Parties will have the right to take all appropriate measure to protect the child (Articles 19-22). Protection of the child is important, as it shows a transition from familial responsibility to State responsibility in fostering the development of a child. Similarly, Article 20 seeks to address potential consequences of the negligence or absence of parents by mentioning children who might temporarily or permanently be deprived of a family environment, such as abandoned, street, or orphans at which point, it becomes the States duty to provide alternative care for the child such as adoption (CRC, 1989, Article 21).

By analyzing articles that focus both on producing a child with full agency and producing a structure for parental and State responsibility and duty to govern the child, the CRC recreates

the child-adult dichotomy, while simultaneously allowing the child to take moments of guided agency. Since adults are given full access to the child's well-being and development, the child becomes a regulated body of adults via the family, State and its various apparatuses. In other words, the child is never given the right to act fully on her or his own during the development process, instead, until the child reaches the age of eighteen, she or he is required to do what is in their best interests as determined by their parents or legal guardian, and in their absence the state. "Their best interests" include things such as, attending school, receiving healthcare service to ensure proper physical development, and any other services that enable she or he to develop into an autonomous adult. As such, although the child is the centerpiece of children's rights, they ultimately do not partake or have a say in the actual justice process. This is particularly important to keep in mind especially in Egypt's attempt to adopt and implement the CRC into its national law. Through the translation of the CRC, given that Egypt also operates under Shari'a or Islamic law, some articles in the CRC, such as Articles 20 and 21 that address adoption, become problematic.

### **Egypt's 1996 Child Law and its 2008 Amendments**

The 1996 Child Law in Egypt is special and is considered to be one of the most important legislations on both a national and international level, as it is "the first national legislation reflecting the spirit and provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child... [and] are provided for by the divine scriptures, the Shari'a, the principles of the Egyptian Constitution and the provisions of the Convention of the Rights of the Child" (The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood [NCCM], 2011: para. 1). The legislation sought to solidify principles and rights nationally as a first step to changing perceptions and concerns regarding children and



women covering a range of topics such as child health care, social welfare, child education, care for the working child and working mother, care and rehabilitation of the disabled child, child culture, and dealing with children having infringed the penal law; along with the establishment of a national council for childhood and motherhood. In 2008, amendments were made as a means to adopt a more “rights-based approach”, which aimed at changing the way in which society viewed children (NCCM, 2011).

The 2008 Amendments to the 1996 Child Law can be seen throughout the document and range from simple changes in the wording, to deletions and additions of articles. Deletions of articles are either incorporated and/or combined with other articles, or they have been rewritten. Similarly, some phrases have been changed such as, “juvenile court” to “child court” in Articles 120-124, 129, 132, 134, and 135. Similarly, three articles were added to the Penal Code and Civil Status that focused on the prohibition of female genital mutilation (Article 242-bis), protection of the child from “trafficking or from sexual, commercial or economic exploitation or from being used in research and scientific experiments” (Article 291), while also allowing the child to “have the right to awareness and be empowered to address those risks” (Article 291), and finally, increasing the marriage age to 18 years of age, but still allowing the State to carry out a medical examination for purposes of ensuring that both individuals are free from diseases that may affect their lives, of each other and that of their offspring (Article 31-bis, added to Law No. 143).

In both the 1996 Child Law and 2008 Amendments, the State tries to translate as much of the CRC as possible into national law. Echoing the same types of restrictions towards child agency, the 1996 Child Law is heavily focused on State regulation and control. Grouped into nine parts with following chapters per part, the first part of the Child Law is similar to the

opening of the CRC, as it defines what a child is and addresses the purposes of the legislation. Drawing out a non-discrimination clause and the right of the child to form her or his own opinions and have access to information with respect to the child's best interest and protection (Articles 1-3), the Child Law invokes the same tone as the opening of the CRC.

What is different is the immediate establishment of the prohibition of adoption in Article 4 as it states, "Parents shall provide the child with necessary care and protection. The State shall provide the child deprived of family care with alternative care. Adoption is prohibited." It is important to note here that at the time of ratification in 1990, Egypt made specific reservations to Articles 20 and 21 stating,

"Since the Islamic Shari'a is one of the fundamental sources of legislation in Egyptian positive law and because the Shari'a, in enjoining the provision of every means to protection and care for children by numerous ways and means, does not include among those ways and means the system of adoption existing in certain other bodies of positive law.

The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt expresses its reservations with respect to all the clauses and provisions relating to adoption in the said Convention, and in particular with respect to the provisions governing adoption in articles 20 and 21 of the Convention" (UN Treaty Collections, 2013).

The prohibition of adoption is significant when analyzed in relation to the second chapter of the Child Law and its address on birth registration.

Containing a total of five chapters that cover practicing the obstetric profession, birth registration, vaccination and immunization of the child, child healthcare card and child nutrition. The most important chapter in this part is Chapter Two: Birth Registration. As stated in Article 15, the persons responsible for reporting the birth is reserved first, to the father if he is present, then to the mother of the child so long as she is able to provide proof of the marital relationship, and the third and fourth right reserved for the directors of facilities where births occur and the sheikh (Child Law, 1996). By specifying which individuals can legally register the child, the

Child Law automatically assumes that most, if not all, children are born through the consent of two married individuals. The assumption here becomes detrimental, especially when one takes into consideration the phenomenon of the street child. As suggested in Chapter One, street children can be the result of a number of conditions, such as broken families, economic instability, and born out of wedlock from consensual and non-consensual sexual encounters. By limiting birth registrations to fathers and mothers who can provide valid marital status, the Child Law excludes the very subject it seeks to protect, the child. Similarly, by banning adoptions one would then have to assume that alternative facilities such as nurseries, orphanages, shelters, or reception centers should be provided. However, as stated in Part Three of the Child Law, which covers the topic of social welfare with respect to the nursery and alternative care, children may only receive these types of services if they are recognized by the State (e.g. valid government documents such as birth certificates).

The restrictions elaborated in Parts Two and Three of the Child Law are extremely important to note with respect to the street child. In restricting birth registrations, what the Child Law has ultimately done is set off a chain reaction of restrictions for the remainder of the rights elaborated in the legislation. If a child is not legally recognized by the State, then she or he, in the eyes of the State, does not exist. There are many complications that arise from their invisibility. On a very basic level, since the child does not exist, she or he becomes more vulnerable to different types of exploitation such as, but not limited to, labor, violence and sexual abuse, and trafficking. Their invisibility to the State also implies a removal from the social norms and rules. For instance, since the State regulates various institutions such as education, and attendance is only allowed if one can present valid government documentation, children who do not have proper documents are then removed from the socialization process. Ironically enough,

in the process of being removed from the system, the State violates the foundation of the CRC, which projects the responsibility and duty of a child's upbringing and development on the family unit and the State. However, since the child cannot rely on the State or its apparatuses, she or he often times resort other forms of survival strategies such as, but not limited to, informal labor, living in the streets, petty left, and bribery. These strategies may also increase the child's susceptibility to exploitation such as cheap labor, prostitution, and trafficking.

Thus, the Child Law creates a vicious cycle of first creating and perpetuating the problem of restricting individuals such as street children, to the consequence of having to take responsibility and duty of rectifying the problem via other apparatuses such as nongovernmental organizations (NGO), which will be further elaborated in the following chapter. The vicious cycle also fuels the child-adult dichotomy; with minimal attention given to analyzing why birth registrations should be limited to the father or mother, the consequences that follow are only projected to the street children themselves, since they must resort to alternative lifestyles for purposes of survival such as violence, substance abuse, petty theft, and begging. It is through their alienation from the society at large that the child engages in her or his own agency and becomes further stigmatized and negatively stereotyped. This may seem like a contradiction to the child-adult dichotomy since alienation allows the child to become "small adults", however, when considering the rights and duties that adults have, children who take on the role of "small adults" are unfortunately, not given any rights. Instead, they are often stigmatized and categorized as nuances in society rather than individuals who are struggling to survive.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PLAN EGYPT AND THE STREET CHILDREN PROGRAM, DEFYING AND REPRODUCING THE CHILD-ADULT DICHOTOMY**

According to some authors such as Al-Azhary Sonbol (1995), Rugh (1995), and Baron (2007), the street child phenomenon in Egypt has been simplified as being the consequence of children born out of wedlock in which the child was left to bare the burden of consequences. However, such simplifications neglect to acknowledge other contributing factors that revolve around the economic, social and political as it too, inevitably affects familial relationships. Over the last couple of years as various economic, social and political challenges continued to fluctuate within Egypt, its impact on familial relationships also became more apparent as it manifested itself both in and outside the household (Plan Egypt, 2011). One manifestation is the rise of the street child. However, not all challenges are negative. Since January 25, 2011 and the resignation of former President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has made attempts to transition to a civil government. In the midst of the political transition, although many solutions to problems such as the declining economy are uncertain, many issues such as sexual harassment, education, and personal status law, are being revisited in the political spotlight (Plan Egypt, 2011). Amongst these topics is the discussion of street children.

As stated in Chapter One, the UNHRC defines a street child as,

“any girl or boy [...] for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults. [...] “Street children” were categorized as either children *on* the street, who worked on the street and went home to their families at night; children *of* the street, who lived on the street, were functionally without family support but maintained family links; or abandoned children who lived completely on their own.” (2012: 4; emphasis original)

Even though the definition has addresses three types of categories, children *on* the street, children *of* the street and abandoned children, it is the most comprehensive and widely accepted. For purposes of this thesis, I would like to further elaborate by adding that street children are minors or persons under the age of 18, who either do not want to or can not return home regardless of whether or not they still maintain relations with their families (Nada and Suliman, 2010). The purpose for specifying an age range and for adding a reference to a street child's relationship, or lack thereof with their family is to reference and add emphasis to the rights and duties specified by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). As elaborated in Chapter Three, some of the rights and duties include the right to education, access to healthcare, and the duty of parents, legal guardian, or the State to ensure the development of the child. Since the CRC is ratified by all States except the United States and Somalia, nongovernmental organizations (NGO) that focus on children use the CRC as its foundation for funding and when designing programs and services.

Thus, the phenomenon of the street child is multifaceted, with varying contributing factors such as the economic, social, political, familial, and violence. Problems encountered by street children include limited or no access to healthcare or sanitary facilities, food and water, and education; additionally street children are often the subjects of discrimination. As such, most NGOs have programs and/or services that focus heavily on two aspects: alleviating the problems encountered and establishing and securing the street child's right to health, food, education and non-discrimination (Plan Egypt, 2013; Caritas Egypte, 2013; Save the Children, 2012; Hope Village Society, 2012).

This chapter will briefly examine the role of NGOs and their impact in Egypt when addressing and implementing children's rights, highlighting some of the main trends in the types

of programs and services offered that revolve around integration and physical and mental healthcare. Following which, I will examine Plan Egypt's Street Children Program in Cairo. Although there are many programs and services offered by other NGOs, Plan Egypt has the most comprehensive approach when addressing the needs of street children. The organization has a unique approach operating on four phases that tackle both at-risk and street children. Additionally, Plan Egypt was specifically chosen because the organization allows the street child to play a direct role in their own life, allowing it access to Korczak's three key rights, as discussed in Chapter Two<sup>1</sup>: (1) the right of the child to die, (2) the right of the child to live for today, and (3) the right of the child to be what she or he is (Eichsteller, 2009). Plan Egypt is therefore a unique and worthwhile case study when examining the concepts of justice and agency. The objective of this chapter, is to illuminate and complicate the purpose of NGO programs and services offered by drawing on in-depth interviews<sup>2</sup> with Plan Egypt personnel and women who were once street children themselves, who currently either continue or discontinue to live in the streets. Interviewees all willingly volunteered to be interviewed. On a field visit to the El-Malek El-Saleh reception center, women who were once street girls willingly and excitedly wanted to participate in the interview process. Social workers were asked if they would like to be interviewed for a research study on street children.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter Two, pg. 19

<sup>2</sup> As elaborated in Chapter One, all interviews were voluntary and conducted between the months of December 2012 and January 2013 and lasted anywhere between 45-90 minutes. All participants gave both written and verbal consent. In the case of 10-year-old Arzak, the only interviewee who was under the age of 18, consent was acquired through her mother who was also present at the time of the interview.

## **Strategies for Successful Integration**

Programs and services offered to street children often focus on development opportunities such as integration, physical and mental healthcare, and lobbying and advocacy efforts to secure and maintain children's rights. NGOs that focus on street children, such as CARE International, Caritas, and Hope Village, may seek to tackle either one or more of these areas, but their implementation is not without resistance from street children themselves, the society at large, and the State in its various manifestations. It is therefore important to problematize these development opportunities and analyze their various implications on the child-adult dichotomy.

Although there are many NGOs that tackle child related issues such as the street child in Egypt, Plan Egypt provides the most comprehensive programs and services; additionally, Plan Egypt is also one operating branch of Plan International, one of the oldest and largest children's development organizations in the world (Plan Egypt, 2013). As stated by Plan International website (2013), the organization was founded over 75 years ago and "works in 50 developing countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas to promote child rights and lift millions of children out of poverty". With no religious, political or governmental affiliations, the organization's main vision is to help "all children realize their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignities" (Plan International, 2013). In order to attain their vision, the organization's mission and approach directly aligns with the CRC as they strive to obtain lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children by focusing on collaboration and integration of these children with their families, communities, organizations and local governments. Therefore programs provided by Plan Egypt focus on different social and



institutional integration alongside services that incorporate and address the physical and mental well-being of children.

Operating since 1981, Plan Egypt tackles various issues related to children and youth, with a strategy to “transform and empower communities and institutions to fulfill the rights of children” (2013, para. 1). The subjects of focus include highly vulnerable groups such as the disabled, street and working children, particularly those affecting girls. A wide variety of issues are covered from violence against children, including female genital mutilation and early marriage, to gender discrimination against girls and women, to weak child and youth participation in schools and communities, increasing number of dropout children and growing disaffection of educated youth due to the lack of jobs. By seeking to understand how violence, economic, social and political conditions affect all members of society, especially the impact on family, Plan Egypt addresses issues such as the protection and participation of children (including street children), youth development and leadership, girls’ and women’s empowerment, and active citizenship, civil society participation and alliance with the government and private sector.

Plan Egypt offers the Street Children Program that aims to “contribute to the integration of street children back into the community members, local organizations and decision-makers who are responsible for taking appropriate actions to promote and protect children’s rights” (2013). The program is implemented through four phases: *Prevention*, which targets vulnerable children and families by raising awareness and counseling; *Outreach*, which targets children who are already living in the streets by sending social workers and psychologists to meet and communicate with the street children; *Transitional*, which focuses on establishing a positive relation of trust and friendship between street children and the community; and *Reintegration*,

which seeks to reunite street children with their families and/or communities. The Street Children Program has been implemented only in East and South Cairo and Alexandria; however, there are other child related programs that have been implemented in Egypt with different foci, such as child laborers, youth media, and youth employability to name a few. In the following sections, I will analyze the physical space as well as the recorded statistical data of the total number of received street children of the two facilities visited, the El Malek el Saleh Reception Center located in Cairo and the Banati Shelter located in 6<sup>th</sup> of October, before delving into in depth analyses of the programs and services provided.

*El Malek el Saleh Reception Center: Using Child Agency as Reinforcement for the Child-Adult Dichotomy*

Reception centers serve as a receiving location for street children, mothers, and families. Information about the reception center is relayed by word of mouth from the *Outreach* team and also from other street children who are familiar with the center. Children who wish to stay at the reception center, can do so on a voluntary basis. Those who wish to stay receive follow-up inspections from trained Plan Egypt personnel as a means to monitor their status and well-being. There is a total of five reception centers located throughout Cairo, however, I only visited the El Malek el Saleh Reception Center (MSRC) given its geographic location and partnership with Plan Egypt.

Situated in the city center<sup>3</sup>, the MSRC is the main referral site for street children who frequent these areas. MSRC has been operating for two and a half years and hosts both girls from

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<sup>3</sup> City center is surrounded by the following neighborhoods: Tahrir, Manial, Sayeda Zeinab, Mohandessin, Dokki, and Zamalek.

ages 1-18 and boys up to the age of 6 only. Girls who stay may be transferred to the Banati Shelter on a case-by-case basis, pending evaluation of behavior, convincing the family, or on the basis of high-risk status or emergency (e.g. a child's first time in the streets). Boys may also be transferred to the Banati Shelter; however, these are typically done so when boys are evaluated and considered as high-risk or emergency cases. Transfers to the Banati Shelter are significant, as the child would be completely removed from the street and the Cairo. Additionally, unlike the MSRC, once the child is at the shelter, she or he would not be able to leave the facility freely. Boys who frequent the RC may only stay until the age of 6, until they are transferred to partnered NGOs who work specifically with boys. At the time of visit in mid-December 2012, the MSRC had received a total of 746 children of which 227 have been transferred to partnered NGOs, 3 out of 25 potential children have been transferred to the Banati Shelter, and currently an approximate of a 150 children still frequent MSRC on a regular basis.

MSRC is a three-story building situated on a corner of two intersecting streets. The buildings around are old and quite worn out. The streets, cluttered with trash and debris, are narrow, allowing only cars and small trucks to fit through. The exterior of the building is modest, more long and narrow than wide in length. The building has multiple rooms, such as an activity hall, a dining room, a physical examination room that also serves as a psychological room, and a lecture hall. Upon entry into the MSRC, one will find the walls painted by the children, in vibrant colors and various pictures of happy faces, flowers, and animals, thus creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Even though all of the walls in the MSRC are painted in a similar way, it is important to note that the wall paintings have three strategic functions: self-expression and therapy, advertisement and recruitment for potential new street children, and marketing to acquire funding for its programs and services. First, the wall paintings allow the street child a

creative outlet in a safe environment for self-expression, which can also serve as a therapeutic outlet as the child becomes acquainted with the right to be what she or he is. Second, for new street children who visit the MSRC, the vibrant colors and pictures create a welcoming atmosphere, one that is juxtaposed to street life where children often encounter violence and discrimination. Since the reception center serves as a receiving location for street children, mothers and families and information of the reception center is relayed by word of mouth, the paintings operate both as a visual and verbal form of advertisement and recruitment technique to increase the probability of removing children from the streets. Lastly, in order for any organization to continue its programs and services, funding is required. By allowing street children to paint the walls, photographic documentation can be used as a marketing strategy to obtain external funds from international organizations, communities, and individuals such as through child sponsorship, which I will further elaborate in this chapter.

In addition to the visible paintings on the wall upon entry, a set of stairs leading to the first floor is also visible along with an open space where trained personnel and children can be seen. Located on the first floor is the activity hall and dining room. Similarly, the third floor serves as an activity hall that is structured like a large living room with comfortable couches, floor rugs, and a television. Both activity halls on the second and third floors host a variety of individual and group sessions that work on behavioral improvements such as coordination, movement and usage of hands and arms, patience and sharing with others, and using alternative methods expression and communication, not violence. Activities used to improve behavior improvements include accessory making, cement wall paintings, drawing and painting on the reception center walls, arts and crafts and literary classes, the dining room may also be used as a space for accessory making. The accessories, and arts and craft are also sold on occasion. Similar

to the visible paintings on the wall, the activities held in the activity hall and dining room also have strategic functions that are focused on the third and fourth phases, transition and reintegration. The individual sessions held allows trained personnel to focus on each child to determine what the child needs, this may include but are not limited to the child's family and home environment and behavior. It is important to note that the focus on family and home environment at this early stage is a start of reintegration. Trained personnel try to identify conflicts within the home environment as a means to determine if a reconciliation strategy or plan can be implemented as a means to remove the child from the street and back into a stable home environment. If this reintegration to the home is not possible, then the focus shifts to reintegration into the society at large by targeting the street child's behavior via socialization. The various activities held during individual and group sessions also function as a therapeutic session and socialization coaching. It seeks to ensure that a street child will learn to work and function on hers or his own time while also providing them with an environment to work in a collaborative and productive manner.

By allowing the street children to sell their accessories and arts and crafts also allows the she or he to take ownership and control of her or his life. In the larger picture, it is indirectly promoting and reinforcing the rights-based discourse assertion that each child has rights in which to allow she or he to become a contributing citizen to the society at large. The locations of the activity hall and dining room are also important. It shouldn't be a surprise that they are located on the first and second floor of the MSRC since it too, like the functions of the vibrantly painted walls seen upon entry, is significant in promoting and reiterating self-expression and therapy, advertisement and recruitment for potential new street children, and marketing to acquire funding for its programs and services. By placing the activity halls and dining room on the first

and second floor ensures that potential new street children will be exposed to “fun” as opposed to danger, instability and hardships they experience in the street. For potential new street children the spectacle of other street children engaging in fun activities that utilize and promote creativity becomes an informative and enticing visual stimulus – one that is juxtaposed to the harsh and perilous realities of the street. Likewise, the location of the activity hall and dining room becomes a promotion of Korczak’s second right, the right of the child to live for today. As elaborated in Chapter Two<sup>4</sup>, the second right emphasizes that “today’s learning is important for tomorrow” where the pedagogue’s task is “not to influence the future fate of the child, but to ensure that the present day is ‘full of happy efforts, child-like, carefree without responsibility that exceeds the age and the power’” (Korczak, 2004: 250 as cited in Eichsteller, 2009). The creative activities employ a very particular type of teaching-learning experience where the child engages in tactile, visual, and auditory stimuli.

On the second floor, adjacent to the second activity hall, is a room used for physical examinations and psychological evaluations. Both individual and group assessment and therapy are conducted where each child can choose whether or not to share their own experiences, ideas, concepts, morals and values with trained personnel as well as with other street children, which also has a reintegration function as it focuses on behavior identification and socialization. By allowing the street child to choose whether or not to share their own experiences, thoughts and ideas, the MSRC implements Korczak’s first right, the child’s right to die. “The child’s right to die” as elaborated in Chapter Two<sup>5</sup> means that a child (and any individual) has the right to take responsibility for their own life and death by allowing the child her or his right to freedom, self-

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter Two, pg. 19

<sup>5</sup> Chapter Two pg. 19

experience and self-determination through various types of regulation. By allowing the child to choose whether or not to relay information, the MSRC allows the child to take responsibility and play an active agent in hers or his own life. However, this is only part of what Korczak meant by the “child’s right to die”. In addition to allowing the child to take risks to gain experience and learn, adults also need to have confidence in the child’s self-determination through respect and that pedagogues need to know the individual child in order to assess where to set boundaries. The first function of the MSRC is to allow the child to choose, however, once the child has chosen to remain and receive continual service with the MSRC, the child’s choice will have to abide accordingly by the stipulations and objectives of Plan Egypt (e.g. integration via socialization and comprehension of rights as specified by the CRC). Therefore it should not be a surprise that the lecture hall is located on the third and last floor of the MSRC facility.

The lecture hall serves as both a learning space and what I call a “rights awareness” space; trained personnel teach children how to read, write and solve basic math and they also familiarize children of their basic rights as specified in the CRC. The lecture hall location within MSRC is significant as it implies a need for commitment of the child to remain at the reception center in order to receive consistent schooling for the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The lecture hall implements Korczak’s first and second rights, the right of the child to die and the right of the child to live for today. The lecture hall implements Korczak’s first right, as the child must choose to commit with the MSRC in order to receive continuous education. By doing so the child becomes an agent in deciding the next step in hers or his life.

It is important to keep in mind that, as mentioned previously, that at the initial stage where the child is merely visiting the MSRC, that she or he would have the decision whether or not to frequent the facility on a regular or spontaneous basis. At this early stage, the child is

given full authority and agency to operate Korczak's first and second rights as they maneuver to and fro the street and MSRC. However, once the child decides to commit to the MSRC, there are regulations that must be abide by; for instance, regular follow-ups with the facility manager Hend as well as other social workers and psychiatrists all with the objective of implementing the organization's transitional and integration phases. In order to ensure the highest probability of transition and integration, the lecture hall becomes a space to socialize the children by teaching basic literacy and numeracy knowledge and by informing them of their rights as children as specified by the CRC. The lecture hall then functions as a space to reconstruct the street child by restructuring their views of themselves in relation to the society at large such as the street, family, community, and the society. Thus, at the latter stage where the child chooses to commit to the MSRC, Korczak's first and second rights become regulated and constructed in accordance to the organization's objectives of transition and integration, rather than open to the child's interpretation.

In implementing Plan Egypt's four phases, the physical arrangement of the MSRC is just as important as the trained personnel. By initiating two of its phases, *Outreach*, not only by the mobile team but also via verbal and visual advertisement and recruitment for potential new street children, and *Reintegration* back into family or society at large, by means of identifying and amending the conflicts at home when possible and by focusing on behavior and socialization through individual and group sessions. The foci points are then supposed to pave the way toward the other two phases, *Prevention* and *Transitional* – where trust and rapport are established between street children and the society which will be elaborated in the next section on the Banati Shelter. Furthermore, the MSRC engages with Korczak's three fundamental rights by allowing the child to choose whether or not to stay at the MSRC, to participate in the individual and group



sessions, to express her or himself freely and creatively<sup>6</sup>, to sell their accessories and arts and crafts, and decide whether or not to commit and receive literacy and numeracy lessons; in other words, the MSRC allows the child to be an active agent in hers or his own life and decision making processes. However, although MSRC allows the child agency to choose, if the child wishes to receive the full range of benefits she or he must abide by the regulations stipulated by Plan Egypt, which entails registration with the NGO, follow-up visits, monitoring by trained personnel to identify and reconcile problematic or improvement areas, and to integrate the child back into society via education. By setting these requirements, Plan Egypt allows a very narrow and directed type of child agency, one that ultimately aligns with and perpetuates the need and the duty of the adult to govern the child. These approaches become more defined and integrated within the conceptual and architectural construction of the Banati Shelter when examining its programs and services.

### *Banati Shelter: Implementing Korczak's Three Rights and its Implications on Agency and Integration*

Unlike reception centers where street children have the freedom to either stay or leave, the shelter hosts children who have been referred either from the MSRC or directly from the streets. Referrals from the reception center to the shelter are done so on a case-by-case basis as previously stated. Street children who are referred to live at the shelter and receive literacy and numeracy education along with other services geared towards integration will be further elaborated in this section. Located in 6<sup>th</sup> October City, a quiet urban city on the outskirts of Cairo, the Banati Shelter (BaS) is a large two-story facility with a ground floor and first floor. It

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<sup>6</sup> Korczak's second right, "the right of the child to live for today" (Korczak, 2004: 250)

sits inside brick walls with a gated entrance surrounded by residential housing complexes. With a maximum holding capacity of 300 children, BaS has both girls and boys residing in the facility. Children are allowed to stay until the age of 18 at which point she or he will be eligible for the rehabilitation program – a solitary program where the individual is working or enrolled to be working. Plan Egypt works with other organizations and the community to establish communication and rapport so that a child, who is ready to be rehabilitated, will be able to rejoin society one step at a time. In 2012, BaS had a total of 90 children whereas at the time I conducted my interviews in mid-January 2013, the total number of children had increased to 145. Of the 145 children, 83 were girls between the ages of 2-16 and 62 were boys between the ages of 2-8.

The architecture of BaS is built in a circular fashion with two main housing facilities, one for girls and another for boys. Positioned opposite of each other, the two housing facilities are conjoined in the center by another circular hallway with stairs leading to the first floor; both are identical in structure. The circular architecture of the facility allows for a “hollow middle” that serves as a courtyard and playground. The playground is paved with grass and sand, furnished with a jungle gym, an area with swings, and scattered wooden seating areas. The circular architectural structure of BaS is important because it allows any person, standing anywhere inside the facility, a clear 360 degree view of the entire facility. With practically no blind spots, except when one is walking from the girls housing facility to the boys, it allows trained personnel to maintain surveillance on all individuals who are present. Although, I was unable to determine from the interviews, whether the architecture was deliberately built in a circular shape, it is still an important feature of the facility.

The location of the BaS is important and has several implications. Since it is situated on the outskirts of Cairo amidst residential housing complexes, depending on traffic 6<sup>th</sup> October City is approximately an hour away from the city center. Its location allows the street children who reside there to be removed from the daily life of the city, whilst also making it easier to physically confine its premises with brick walls and a gated entrance. The location also allows easy access for adults to come to and fro, but not necessarily children, which is significant to note, as it grants adults full accessibility and delegates responsibility to the adult, as opposed to the child. Similar to the juxtaposition of the MSRC's internal atmosphere and the streets surrounding it, BaS provides a quiet safe haven atmosphere where street children interact with other street children and adults simply as *children*. The contrast is important, as the street children living in the city are susceptible to other dangers such substance abuse, physical and sexual abuse, violence and other forms of exploitation, whereas their residence at BaS is far removed from those dangers within brick enclosures and the surrounding area composed mostly of residential compounds with scatter shopping centers and malls, and national universities. Thus, by removing the *street* from the children, BaS constructed a physical embodiment of Korczak's second fundamental right, the right of the child to live for today and a part of his third fundamental right, the right of the child to be what she or he in accordance with the rights drawn by the CRC. However, the third fundamental right also had a further implication on the child's own identity. Going beyond the confines of the CRC, Korczak suggested that the identity would be chosen by the child, not *for* the child, and would thus include *being* the person that the child is (Eichsteller, 2009: 387). This, however, is not the case in BaS, as the services rendered construct a very particular type of subject, thus reproducing the child-adult dichotomy.

The differences lie in the programs offered at BaS; with a main focus on education programs, BaS seeks to incorporate all street children regardless of age or valid government identification. The programs include preschool, government, experimental, literacy and Montessori. Regardless of the type of program, they all seek to integrate the street child back into the society at large. Focused on various aspects of the social such as behaviors and mannerisms, knowledge and education, each program targets a specific group of children. For instance, the preschool and Montessori programs target early aged children prior to integration into a school. The Montessori program is located on the first floor in a room that is situated in between the two facilities and is furnished with chairs, desks, shelves and some rugs on the floor for the children to sit on. The activities are meant to represent “daily life” and are divided into various sections with different focus points. Targeting children between the ages of two and half and six, the Montessori program has designated sections to help children in the pre-stages of learning with activities geared toward hygiene, self-confidence, muscle strengthening and development, daily life skills, and concentration practices. Additionally, the Montessori program is also adding a new phase to target older girls with designated sections that target mannerisms and social etiquette, confidence building, self respect and respect of others, concentration exercises, calligraphy, geography, history, math and science, sensory based activities, spatial or logic games, volume and weight games, measurements, and identification and management of time. Some of the activities and exercises include identifying smells via different types of spices, identifying spatial differences in length, width and depth by arranging cylindrical, rectangular and triangular blocks. Other activities include washing the windows, systematically cleaning the floor and desk, and folding hand towels. All activities targeted the child’s sensory and motor skills as a means to familiarize and help the child develop their basic senses. Similarly, the

preschool program provides Arabic, English and mathematical education. Classrooms are furnished with basic chairs, desks and shelves, and are located on the ground floor in the girls' facility. Similar to the walls at the MSRC, they are decorated with the children's works or art or achievements. The government and experimental programs are not located at BaS and require official State documents such as birth certificates for enrollment. Governmental programs are essentially national schools where children may enroll for education. Experimental programs differ from governmental programs because they are only taught in English. Aside from the standard Arabic, English, and mathematical education, it also includes other creative outlets such as painting, drawing, fashion and accessories, pottery, and arts and crafts. The function of creative forms of expression is to help the street children identify and understand her or himself. Lastly, BaS offers a literacy program, which targets children who have either had no schooling, or official State documents. The goal is again, to integrate all street children, regardless of their current status, back into the society at large.

Regardless of the type of education program, the activities and sections per program are designed to establish a very particular type of foundation, one that is determined to guide and mold the street child into a child that fits within the community and ultimately the society at large. Providing sections that help to develop sensory awareness, the education programs slowly allow the child to become more aware of hers or his own body. Sensory awareness coupled with hygiene, confidence, mannerisms, and social etiquette sections further reinforce a very particular type of normality that is accepted within the society. Every education program then serves as the stepping block to the next level of accepted behaviors and knowledge and, thus, would guarantee a higher percentage of successful integration, however what does this suggest about agency? If one will recall, at the MSRC, a street child has the option of choosing whether or not she or he

would like to remain at the facility. The street child has the decision, or the agency to decide which services they would accept and refuse. With the lack of, or sporadic investment, street children at the MSRC are free to move to and from as they please. Although they are unable to receive all the services provided, they did have the option to move freely. At the BaS, the child's agency has been completely removed. The child is not free to move in and out of the compound as the facility is enclosed in a brick wall and the entrance gate. Similarly, the programs and services offered are established, maintained and managed by trained personnel – the adults. As such, the children are guided and molded accordingly, based on what is perceived to be socially acceptable as all programs aim to integrate the child back into the society as a contributing adult. By removing the child's agency, BaS reinforces the child-adult dichotomy by shifting all responsibility and control to the adult. Even with services that imply the possibility for child agency, such as creativity projects where the child is supposed to have free range for self-exploration and expression, is guided and mediated accordingly by the adult.

Similar to the creativity projects offered at the MSRC, street children at BaS are encouraged to engage in creative and artistic activities such as painting and drawing on walls, arts and crafts, accessory making, fashion and photography. The artistically oriented activities have a dual function. On the one hand, they allow the child to engage with her or himself by exploring different ways of expression, on the other, it also serves as a means to implement integration policies via socialization. There are also additions to the creative and artistic activities such as photography, which can be seen throughout BaS and are displayed on the walls of the circular conjuncture of the girls and boys housing facilities. This added creative medium serves an additional dual purpose. By teaching and allowing children to document the world around them with a camera, NGOs are able to construct a very particular type of child narrative. With

this construction, they not only allow the child an additional creative outlet by giving the child agency to view and engage with the world, but the photography also serves as an advertising and fundraising function – for both the organization and the child. I argue, however, that the agency of the child in these creative outlets is not entirely the child's, as she or he must attend training or learning sessions – such as photography sessions, before they are allowed to use equipment. For instance, during my visit to BaS, in the circular hall that conjoins both the girls and the boys' facility, photographs that were taken by the children were hung up for display. Before a street child is given a camera, she or he must first learn how to use a camera. They are required to take photography classes, during which they also receive in-class awards for the quality of their photos. The assessment of the photos is another example of guided agency, where the adult either approves or disapproves of the quality of work. Thus, rather than allowing the child full agency to freely express or capture the world according to hers or his own eyes, the photos are assessed and those praised and selected are used to construct a very particular street child narrative, which are later used both as an advertisement to combat the attitudes, treatment and stereotypes of the community towards by bringing and spreading awareness via art exhibitions (Rached and Gamal El Din, 2006). They are also used to generate funds for the NGO and the child, which further stresses the importance of the need to guide and structure the child's agency and their ability to *become* an adult by the adults in charge. It is therefore ironic when a photo taken by a street girl receives an award from National Geographic or when photos are collectively compiled as a showcase for Open Day as they are marketed as being the representation of the world seen through the street children's eyes, when in fact they are products of programs that seek to integrate the children back into society via a particular structure that omits the child's agency from the equation.

Integration methods that are not limited to education and socialization rather they also include the physical appearance and engagement of the children with other children and adults. During my visit, the girls that were present in the courtyard were clean, well dressed, looked well fed, and enjoyed socializing and frolicking in the playground. The children's behaviors and expressions also exuded a tone of carefreeness, happiness and peacefulness. They were very eager to greet Mohamed Tag, the Street Children Program Coordinator for Plan Egypt, Nermin Nasser, the Street Children Program Assistant and Arabic-English translator, and myself. Upon our arrival, a group of girls ran toward us, jumping and almost impatiently and eagerly waiting to receive hugs from us. The children were enthusiastic and wanted to tell us the newest endeavor they experienced. They bombarded me with questions such as, "Ezyk 3mla a? [*Hello, how are you?*]," "Enty Cinni? Jabani? [*Are you Chinese? Japanese?*]," "Mineen fein? [*Where are you from?*]," and "3andek kam sana? [*How old are you?*]." When they discovered that I only understand basic Arabic, the girls went over to Nermin and asked her to teach them how to say, "Play with us," before coming back to me to repeat the phrase. Sometimes they would forget how to say a word and run back to Nermin. In the 30-45 minutes spent in the playground, most of the girls ran back and forth between Nermin and I speaking between Arabic and Basic English. There were a couple of girls who had a stronger foundation of English and were excited to show me by reciting the alphabet and counting numbers.

It is important to note the girls' appearance and behavior in the courtyard. The girls' appearances are different from the girls I interacted with at MSRC. The girls at the MSRC were dressed in worn clothing, some with stains and visible tears in the fabric. Their hairs and nails were usually covered in some dried dirt. Additionally, street children often distrust adults given their conditions and experiences. Which was the case at the MSRC when I visited back in



December 2012. Although the children were engaged in the activities and Hend, upon arrival most of the children were hesitant to approach us. Standing at least a table length away from us, they often observed our movements. With the exception of a few girls such as the ones interviewed, most of them were cautious to engage us and either stood near the other street girls or with one of the staff members. It is therefore worthwhile to note the difference in the street children's behavior at the MSRC and BaS. The enthusiasm and eagerness exhibited by the girls at the BaS can then be seen as a testimony of success when it comes to the integration policy. By establishing and building rapport with social workers and psychologists, the street girls playing in the courtyard have learned to trust adults and have even taken the initiative to engage with them by asking questions. Thus, their progress in engaging with adults in a positive manner aligns with the organization's objectives and can be seen as the foundational steps of being reintegrated into the community and society.

Most of the other children I met at BaS reacted in a similar fashion, however there were a small percentage of both street boys and girls who were quite shy and a little bit hesitant to engage with me. This group comprised mostly of children between the ages of 5-9, they resisted immediate interaction with me I met most of the children who were hesitant in the literacy and the Montessori classrooms, as well as in their individual sleeping quarters. As we toured BaS, most of the children were either in class or playing in a designated common room. Most of the children I met in the literacy and Montessori classrooms did not engage with me. Instead, they carefully observed me from a distance and when I proceeded to smile or wave to them, they reacted by looking away quickly either back at their original task or at another area in the classroom, or some would frown, unsure of how to respond. I spent approximately five to ten minutes in every classroom and for the remainder of the time spent, the children carefully

alternated between their given tasks and observing my movements. With the exception of some of the youngest children between the ages of 2-3 in the preschools, who ran up and wanted me to carry and play with them, children between the ages of 5-9 were by far the most cautious; this however, should not be surprising. Since all children staying at the BaS are there by referral, it is very likely that the youngest children there were referred based on an emergency basis as previously mentioned. If these children had already spent time living in the streets and are not transferred to BaS, it should not be a surprise that they are hesitant and wary of their surrounding. Given that BaS is completely enclosed behind brick walls and a gated entrance, these children still require time to build rapport and trust of others around them. It is this trust that the child is slowly reintegrated into the society at large as the child transitions from living in the unrestricted space of the street into a space that is surveyed with mediated restrictions of society via rules established by the adult. This shift from one space to another also affects the child's agency.

Whilst living in the streets, the child is like an adult, they have full access to their own agency, making decisions and judgment calls as to how they navigate through the streets, interact with others, and how to acquire materials and commodities; despite the environment and obstacles faced, they essentially learn how to survive. Although the rules are different from what is considered to be the norm and accepted rules of society, street children learn how to survive by creating their own rules and coping mechanisms, which may include but are not limited to begging, bargaining, stealing, violence, and substance abuse. Adults make decisions and judgment calls accordingly in their day-to-day lives. Adults also learn how to survive and adapt to obstacles faced by taking on different types of coping mechanisms; depending on the individual and situation, begging, bargaining, stealing, violence, and substance abuse are also not

unheard of. The only difference between a child's agency in the street and that of an adult within society is that the actions taken by the adult are accepted, as they are based on the premise of the child-adult dichotomy. By viewing the adult as a complete *being* is to assume that she or he is capable of making the right choices, and, if not, that she or he would be held responsible, whereas the child who is viewed as an incomplete being who is still in the process of *becoming*, becomes the victim when she or he encounters obstacles and hardships. This dichotomy neglects to take into consideration that the child her or himself, is essentially an active agent, especially with regards to the street child where day-to-day decisions become vital for survival and self-sustainability. Therefore the transition from unrestricted space in the streets to confinement of BaS not only serves as a stronghold to ensure the success and legitimacy of integration, but its neglect to acknowledge the street child's agency both on and off the street also serves as a propagation of the child-adult dichotomy by overemphasizing the completeness of the adult *being* and the incompleteness and the child's state of *becoming*.

Aside from the education programs and services provided by BaS, the facility also hosts visiting hours and Open Days as a means to facilitate integration by breaking down negative attitudes and stereotypes of street children. Visiting hours are meant for parents and families of the street children. They are monitored visits where the street children and hers or his family has the opportunity to interact. The street children often times are proud of their accomplishments at BaS and parents have the opportunity to see an alternative lifestyle for the children, one that is off the streets with potentials of successful integration. During these visits, trained personnel also speak with parents as a means to bridge the integration process. By gaining more information on the status of the parents or families, the organization is also able to gather data on the contributing or sustaining factors of why children and families remain in the street. They may

also gain insights into other problematic areas that may be linked to the phenomenon such as health risks, violence, sexual and substance abuse. By maintaining communication and allowing monitored visiting hours, BaS establishes an open dialogue between the streets and the facility – one that can provide valuable information to facilitate higher rates of integration. On the other hand, Open Days pave the way for community integration by inviting and allowing surrounding community members and children and staff members from formal government schools to visit BaS and engage with the street children. Creative works produced by the street children such as paintings, arts and crafts, and photographs are featured and put on exhibition. Sometimes the street children even perform in a fashion show. By inviting and allowing a two way interaction between the street children and the community, BaS provides an environment where the preconceptions and stereotypes of street children can and are challenged, thus paving the way for a smoother integration process for both the street child and the community.

### **Integration Programs: Disregard Child Agency and Reproduce the Child-Adult Dichotomy**

In Egypt, integration programs typically focus on the girl-child. For instance, NGOs such as Hope Village, CARE International, and Caritas, all have programs that give specific emphasis to the well being of female children. With programs titled with the phrase “girl-child”, some of these programs focus specifically on the girl-child’s physical body. Plan Egypt (2013) is no different, as it offers additional specialized programs such as Village Savings and Loan Associations which encourages girls and women to save money and reinvest via loans amongst themselves, REFLECT which helps girls and women acquire literacy and numeracy while also raising awareness about their own rights, reduction of harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, and lastly, a Girls’ Education Initiative, which seeks to increase

quality and inclusiveness of formal and non-formal education for girls. Similarly, the Street Children Program is also heavily focused on the girl-child with its two operating facilities the MSRC and BaS hosting predominantly girls whose age range between 1-18 respectively. Although both the MSRC and the BaS host boys, there are age restrictions that determine how long a street boy may stay. The MSRC allows temporary host of boys up to the age of 6. However, at BaS, boys are usually accepted between the ages of 2½ or 3 and may remain so long as they are still considered young, approximately the ages of 14-16, before referral and transfer to another NGO that focuses on boys.

Promoted and implemented by NGOs, integration programs often focus on incorporating the child back into the family, mainstream education, and/or the society at large by penetrating legal, economic and social venues. Legal approaches include amending or adding to the existing legislation and State recognition such as obtaining a valid birth certificate or marriage license. Economic venues may focus on securing a job for the street child, but it also includes educational and vocational programs and services, as it is the foundation for developing transferable skills. Social integration tends to revolve around positively altering the societal perception of street children by debunking stereotypes, amending and involving family and community interactions with street children. It also intersects with other social institutions such as mainstreaming children into education, and physical and mental health.

The purpose of institutional integration programs is then to remove the subject in question from the street, and from being an outlier of the society to one that contributes to, and positively engages with the society. The implication here is problematic as the child in question may resist integration efforts and in many cases; additionally, if she or he is (re)integrated, may face violent retaliation from family or society because of shame or dishonor brought on by their

disobedience. Take for instance, Sarah, now 24-years-old with a 2-year-old son. She has been living in the streets since age 14 because her father forbade her to wear jeans. She explained that after living on the streets for four years – until the age of 18, she tried to return home at which point her father set her on fire. Sarah's story problematizes the concept of institutional integration on many levels. Her initial disobedience is her desire to wear jeans, which her father objects. Her desire to wear jeans is therefore symbolic as it portrays her inability to be integrated into her family based on differing viewpoints. The pair of jeans is also symbolic on larger scale; as an individual, Sarah views the pair of jeans as a means to be integrated into the larger society. Even before addressing her attempt to return home, the initial conflict over what seemed to be a very simple pair of jeans is now symbolic for two different integration issues. The result of the conflict is Sarah's decision to leave home to reside in the streets in which she struggles with three other forms of integration, integration into the society, into marriage, and family.

At the age of 18, Sarah decides to return home after being raped in the streets. Having unsuccessfully lived in the streets where she was exposed to sexual violence, she returned home only to be set on fire by her father. The action her father takes not only depicts the inability for Sarah to return home, but also the violent retaliation from her family because of the shame and dishonor she brings by returning. As a further attempt to be reintegrated back into the family, she agrees to marry a friend of her father's. However, her attempt to stay in the family is again unsuccessful as a quarrel between her husband and siblings forces her out and back into the streets. In Sarah's testimony, the concept of integration mutates according to her environment and objectives. This mutation makes apparent that the concept of integration is not stagnant or universal.

Integrating a child back into society also implies that she or he must abide by the various societal rules and regulations; for example, accepted social etiquettes and legal jurisprudence, which would require the child to relinquish their acquired freedom from the streets such as, but not limited to illicit jobs, drug use, sexual promiscuity, and lack of a curfew. Depending on the region, these societal rules and regulations often perpetuate particular gender constructions and stereotypes of girls and boys, which would result in varying forms of restrictions that subsequently affect the types of programs and services offered by NGOs. Integrating the child back into society is also restrictive, as it assumes certain characteristics of the street. If the society plays an important role in providing a sociable and safe environment for children to develop into an adult, then the street is seen as a dangerous, violent and unstable environment. By accepting these assumptions, the street is deemed unacceptable to live and serves only as a means for transport from point “a” to point “b”. This understanding, however, is complicated by Rasha’s dreams. Rasha, aged twenty-one, with two daughters aged two and half and four at the time of the interview on December 11, 2012, has been a “street child” since the age of eight. Originally from Aswan, her family moved to Cairo for work. She explained that the reason why she left home wasn’t because of finances, as her father is wealthy, but rather, it was because of her father’s psychological and physical abuse. Detailing some of her experiences in the street, she recalls being kidnapped and physically injured from protecting other street children who were being kidnapped and raped. It is through her experiences that she reveals her desire and dream to one day return to the streets so that she may build a safe place for street children to stay. She adamantly stated that her desire to do so is rooted in her understanding that most of the girls living in the streets are working all day and at night, they have no safe residence to stay and this is why they become targets of kidnappings and rapes. Although Rasha’s experience supports

the assumption that streets are a dangerous, violent, and unstable environment it overlooks the complexity of the street as being a place in which some go to acquire basic needs. For Rasha, the street is also a place where shelter and safety can be introduced, a place where integration of an environment can be introduced as opposed to integrating an individual into an environment.

In thinking through the concept of integration, it becomes difficult for one to clearly define what is meant by “integration” as the term and its implementation is not universal. The question of “who” desires integration, “what” type of integration, and, finally, what is the goal or objective of integration, becomes difficult to answer, depending on the viewpoint of the individual and situation. Taking into consideration the symbolic meaning of Sarah’s desire to wear jeans or Rasha’s dream to return to the street, the concept of integration becomes fluid, changing from a more traditional way of trying to integrate a person into a specific type of environment to the integration of a specific type of space as a means to challenge the assumptions of how people interact with a certain preconceived environment. What is interesting is that the programs and services provided by Plan Egypt and its partners all understand integration in its traditional form. Attempts at integration via programs and projects all seek to integrate the street child back into the societal institutions such as the family, community, or the State. The question left lingering is, what if institutional integration focused on creating and integrating a specific type of space into an environment rather than seeking to remove and alter the characteristics of the child so that she or he might fit into one space to another?

### *Physical and Mental Healthcare Programs: Creating the Integrable Child*

Implementation of physical and mental healthcare may also be tricky as it requires documentation from medical personnel and depending on the nature of the case, it may also



require short- or long-term follow up. In Egypt, in order to receive physical or mental healthcare, the individual would have to be legally recognized by the State (Child Law, 1996, Part 4). This is established by providing government authorized paperwork such as a birth certificate. However, as expressed by Mohamed Tag and other Plan Egypt personnel, some children either do not have access to this information, or they are simply not registered with the state; this is especially true when it comes to newborns of street girls (personal communication, December 11, 2012; January 17, 2013). In order provide the street child with at least basic healthcare, obtaining a birth certificate either through the family or the government is necessary. In the past, if the family did not register the child, then the birth certificate would only be obtainable if the father of the child, not the mother, went to the hospital and filed for the official document. If the father refused, then the child was left unregistered and invisible in the Egyptian society. In recent years, however, the BaS have been able to secure birth certificates for unregistered street children with the mother. At the time of the interview in mid-January 2013, BaS was successful in obtaining twelve birth certificates for children who were not previously registered.

Mental healthcare also proves to be tricky. As expressed by Rasha, individual and group sessions with a psychiatrist provided by MSRC are not pleasant experiences. Even though Rasha did not want to elaborate more on the subject, one can speculate on the reasoning behind the discomfort. Given the conditions and experiences that street girls endure, which often times include violence, sexual abuse, rape or unwanted pregnancies, asking the girls to recount their experiences or feelings not only forces them to relive that particular moment. It may also trigger other psychological disorders such as depression, low self-esteem, and guilt. Although the institutional motivation behind mental healthcare is good as the objective is to help street

children work through their experiences, the actual implementation of mental healthcare may cause a backlash.

Depending on the street child, often times there is a mistrust of adults due to their experience with sexual or nonsexual abuse and violence, all of which may occur in the household or in the street from other street children, police or other members of society (Richter, 1988). Efforts taken would then be to establish trust and rapport however, as reiterated by all individuals interviewed at Plan Egypt, one must also take into consideration that the initial information obtained are usually falsified (personal communications, December 11, 2012); thus implying that in order to implement physical and mental healthcare, time may be a challenging factor to overcome. Additionally, NGOs such as Plan Egypt may also have their own stipulations for those who wish to receive physical and mental health services such as mandatory registration with the NGO or its services. These stipulations could therefore impede on the street child's acquired freedom and result in further resistance.

#### *Lobbying and Advocacy: Manufacturing Child Agency and Reproducing the Dichotomy*

Lobbying and advocacy efforts to secure and maintain children's rights have numerous economic, social and legal implications. Funding can be acquired from different types of donors such as international aid and political organizations, and may come with its own stipulations, agendas or quotas. Although a positive outcome from these conditions may include exchange of information, data, and resources, social and legal implications also bind the organization to a certain type of discourse or framework. For instance, as the most celebrated agreement amongst States, ratification of the CRC ensures that the

“Committee on the Rights of the Child, an internationally elected body of independent experts that sit in Geneva to monitor the Convention's implementation, requires governments [...] to submit regular reports on the status of children's rights in their countries. The Committee reviews and comments on these reports and encourages States to take special measures and to develop special institutions for the promotion and protection of children's rights. Where necessary, the Committee calls for international assistance from other governments and technical assistance from organizations like UNICEF” (UNICEF, 2005).

Since Egypt has both signed and ratified the CRC and taken the effort to translate the CRC into national law, it is subject to review by the Committee and is eligible to receive international assistance. As an NGO that operates under the CRC framework, Plan Egypt is therefore eligible to receive assistance and does receive funding assistance from the twelve governmental agencies including USAID and CIDA, as well as from six multilateral organizations including the European Commission, ECHO, The Global Fund, UNICEF, World Bank and the World Food Program (Plan International, 2013). Plan International also accepts child sponsorships which typically costs €22 per month or approximately \$29USD per month. In a report published by Plan, a bar graph depicts the income acquired from January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, with a 7% increase or an added amount of €42 million from the previous year, Plan raised a total of €634 million (2012, 32). In the report the bar group is coded in three different colors, blue representing the funds raised from child sponsorships, brown from grants, and yellow from other sources of income. Starting back in 2008 to 2012, funds received from sponsorships comprise approximately 85% of the total in both 2008 and 2009. In 2010, sponsorships comprised approximately 75%, 2011 approximately 60% and in 2012 approximately 50%. Although the total percentage has dropped, the blue bars representing sponsorship funding did not change much. The change in percentage is attributed to the rise in other contributors.

It is important to note the funding here because even in 2012 over 50% of all the funds allocated came from child sponsorships. By reflecting on Plan International's (2013) mission to

enable deprived children, their families, and their communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate and benefit from their societies, utilizing creative programs and projects at both the MSRC and BaS might have enabled Plan Egypt and its partners to contribute to the fundraising from both the local and international community. As previously discussed in this chapter, the floor plan and the strategically painted walls of the MSRC have three strategic functions in which one of them is marketing to acquire funding for its programs and services. By allowing the street children to paint on the walls of the MSRC and photograph the world through their eyes at BaS, creative pieces become concrete documentations of the street children. It added value for potential sponsors by suggesting success of Plan International's agenda. Furthermore, by using annual published reports, which are also part of the specifications of the CRC, Plan International contributed to the organization's success by providing statistics of the number of children who have been helped. Featuring successful cases of children, who have been integrated, removed from child labor, provided with sexual and reproductive health, amongst other services around the globe, Plan International increased their annual funds by 7%. The funding is important as the reports produced, although they seek to eliminate problems and negative conditions that afflict children, it also reproduces the child-adult dichotomy by manufacturing a very particular view of the child as a victim and the adult as the rescuer and protector. Thus, lobbying and advocacy efforts reinforce and reproduce the existing hegemonic conceptualization of children's rights.

## **Momentary Junctures of Defying the Child-Adult Dichotomy that Lead to its Inevitable Perpetuation**

At the start of this chapter, I analyzed the various ways in which street children interacted and are situated at the MSRC and BaS facilities. Partnered with Plan Egypt, both the MSRC and BaS offer moments where the street child becomes her or his own agent. Incorporating Korczak's three fundamental rights for children, both facilities had moments in which the child was able to choose and act for her or himself. For instance, the street child's ability to choose whether or not she or he would like to stay at the MSRC to receive partial or all offered programs and services. Similarly, the street children's engagement with the creative programs and services offered at BaS. I emphasized that the architecture and layout of the two facilities implied a complex role and relationship with the adult. On the one hand, although street children were allowed agency through programs and activities such as artistic expressions by using paintings, arts and crafts, accessories, fashion shows, or photography, guidance from prior workshops or training sessions along with surveillance of the children still perpetuated the philosophical underpinnings of the child-adult dichotomy. Additionally, the artwork produced also functioned as a marketing strategy to raise funds.

During my accounts of interviews with women who were once street girls, I tried to analyze the ways in which integration is understood. By focusing on the vulnerability of the street children and the necessity to integrate them back into the various institutions of society such as the family, community and state, the child was oversimplified and hers or his reasons for retreating to the streets overlooked. In doing so, adults underestimated the complexity of the concept of integration and assumed it to be the best solution. It is also in this process that adults neglect to take into consideration the dreams and creative agency of the street child such as

Rasha, who wished to return to the streets as a means to change the environment to suit the street children as opposed to the other way around. The subsequent effects of these assumptions and views lead to one outcome, the perpetuation of the child-adult dichotomy in which the child is seen as vulnerable and susceptible to dangers not just in the streets from other street children, adults, violence, substance and sexual abuse, but also to the potential dangers from within the household – like the account given by Sarah. This idea of vulnerability is heavily reiterated in the post-January 25<sup>th</sup> Egyptian media when street children go from invisible to visible in the Egyptian public.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AS THE CATALYST FOR NORMALIZING GOVERNMENTALITY AND BIOPOLITICS

In the last three chapters of this thesis, I have tried to deconstruct the child-adult dichotomy by examining the philosophical implications, its subsequent application within the international human rights law (IHRL) framework vis-à-vis the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>7</sup> and its adaptation into Egypt's national law. I argued that in the current IHRL framework, the relationship between the child and adult is dichotomous where the child is understood to be incomplete, or a being that is in the process of *becoming* the adult, who, in turn, is perceived as a complete and fully developed *being*. This viewpoint is reflected and perpetuated in the CRC articles as it denotes the importance and duty of the adult to protect and ensure the well-being of the child, and in the absence of the adult, the duty is given to the State and its various institutions. In order to better understand how these concepts function within a society and their implications on agency and justice, I analyzed Egypt's 1995 Child Law and its 2008 Amendments as these documents serve as the first attempt to translate the CRC into State legislation in Chapter Three and its implementation via programs and services offered by Plan Egypt for street children in Chapter Four. I concluded in Chapter Four by critiquing and suggesting that the available programs and services offered are heavily focused on an integration framework and as such, only allow occasional opportunities of child agency so long as it aligns and perpetuates the child-adult dichotomy.

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<sup>7</sup> The CRC has been ratified (either with or without reservations) by 195 of 197 State parties; the only States that have refused are Somalia and the United States.

In this final chapter, I would like to situate and present a broader analysis of children's rights within the larger framework of the rights-based discourse and its implication on human relationships and the society at large. I challenge the reliance of the rights-based discourse by arguing that the objective and outcome not only perpetuates the child-adult dichotomy but it goes further by normalizing and legitimizing the need for governmentality via the usage of what I term, managerial governance by NGOs. The term 'governmentality' originates from Foucault (1978-79) who elaborates on the role of the governments in trying to produce a citizen that is fit to perform and fulfill the government's policies. As a result, it manufactures and reproduces a very particular type of individual, one that Foucault (1977) elaborates as being both the prisoner and the guard of the society. Governance

“[...] concerns the structures, functions, processes, and organizational traditions that have been put in place within the context of a program's authorizing environment 'to ensure that the [program] is run in such a way that it achieves its objectives in an effective and transparent manner'” (Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators International, nd., as cited in The World Bank, 2013). It is the 'framework of accountability to users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which organizations take decisions, and lead and control their functions, to achieve their objectives.'” (United Kingdom Audi Commission, 2003 as cited in The World Bank, 2013).

Managerial governance, therefore, is the day-to-day operations (e.g. policies, strategies, and procedures) that are established and implemented as a means to achieve the organization's objectives. In relation to street children, two types of managerial governance can be identified in the pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup> portrayal of street children. Pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> portrayal of street children focused on blame and responsibility of adults and questioned the duties and responsibility of the State in addressing street children rather than on stories of the street children. Post-January 25<sup>th</sup> portrayal of street children brought more political visibility to street



children as exemplified by the case-by-case features of children. The shift, however, still promotes the necessity of managerial governance via NGOs.

In order to show this, I will briefly analyze online English news articles published pre- and post January 25<sup>th</sup> from four news organizations: Al Jazeera English, Al Ahram Online, Daily News Egypt, and Egypt Independent. The four organizations were chosen as they represented three different types of audiences, the international community, the Middle East regional community, and the Egyptian community. Additionally, I also examine two documentaries, *Voices from the Street: Testimonies of Cairo's Street Children*, which was produced for UNICEF Egypt and screened at the International Conference for Street Children in 2004, and *El-Banate Dol* [These Girls], which was produced in 2006 and has been screened at multiple international festivals such as, but not limited to the Cannes Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, and the New York Film Festival. It is important to mention, that it is only post-January 25<sup>th</sup> with the number of unidentified children's bodies on the street and the street children's role within Tahrir Square during the 18 days, that the street child emerges and is more visible as a political issue in the Egyptian public. Acknowledgement of their existence in the mediatized space resulted in questions that shifted from a pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> focus on managerial governmentality and structures of NGOs, to a post-January 25<sup>th</sup> focus on traumatic case-by-case studies that result in the importance of implementing regulatory apparatuses. However, questions posed both pre- and post January 25<sup>th</sup> alludes to the same conclusion, preservation of the child-adult dichotomy and the necessity of State governance via legislation and NGOs.

Following media analyses, I will synthesize the ethnographic findings of this thesis with the role of the Egyptian media on addressing Cairo street children. I argue that, although the media, with help of NGOs like Plan Egypt, has brought more visibility to the plight of the street

child, the perceptions whether positive or negative has ultimately reproduced the child-adult dichotomy. Subsequently, this reproduction perpetuates the need and reliance on the State and its various apparatuses to define and set the conditions and deliverance of justice, which leads to the normalization and justification of governmentality over the child; inevitably, it creates a vicious cycle of State surveillance and regulation over the body of not just children, but of all individuals. Accordingly, a single yet complex question remains, are we capable of moving beyond dichotomies? Thus, my objective in this final chapter is not to provide a definitive answer to this question but instead, I seek to explore and complicate the various ways in which we comprehend and apply dichotomous categories. By challenging this framework, I wish to critically engage and reflect on other potentialities of being and justice that are not only applicable to the child-adult dichotomy, but ultimately, the all dichotomously categorized human relationships.

### **Granting Visibility to the Invisible and Playing “Teeter Totter” with Blame and Responsibility**

As previously stated in this thesis, the street child phenomenon is not new in Egypt. However, their visibility from the street to the society via the news and documentaries has gained considerable attention since January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The purpose of this section is not to overgeneralize on the perceptions of the street child in the public eye, as determining the types of perceptions that have been constructed would require an entirely new study that is focused on exploring the different portrayals of the street child via language and symbols. Instead, by drawing on some documentaries and online news articles that have been circulated about Cairo street children pre- and post January 25<sup>th</sup>, I would like to shed some light as to how language is

used when it comes to constructing the categories of child and adult vis-à-vis the street child with respect to agency and justice. What arises from these visual, audio, and linguistic documentations, is a complex visualization of the street child within the society. Entrenched in themes of blame and responsibility, these documentations show a very fluid conception of the child and adult dichotomy and disrupts the rigidity of viewing the child and adult as only *becomings* and *beings*.

Articles that were published pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> focused on managerial governance via state legislation and NGO programs with street children. Articles that were published were managed accordingly by either the news organization or NGOs to construct two particular types of image of the street child. Articles published by news organizations had minimal and brief mentions of the phrases “street child(ren)” or “children on the street”. The mentions often occurred at the end of the article, which will be further elaborated. The focal point of the news articles was to simply shed light on the ways in which the State and its various apparatuses managed and governed the child subject and the ways in which the concept of rights could be implemented or improved upon. News articles did not feature the children themselves. In the two documentaries in which the street children became the focus, their image and stories were used as a catalyst to further propel the agenda of managerial governance but from a different point of view of victimization and vulnerability. The portrayals of children were blatant as the camera followed them into the streets and to different NGO facilities throughout Cairo. The same shift in focus occurs in the news articles that were published post-January 25<sup>th</sup> that utilized traumatic case-by-case studies to promote the NGO programs and services. Post-January 25<sup>th</sup> articles often gave detailed accounts or descriptions of the street child’s experience. Although the emphasis was now on the street children themselves, the arguments in the article still outlined the necessity for managerial

governance of children. It also extends further to the necessity of biopolitics, or the necessity of and extension of state power over all individuals within the society such as the family unit, business owners, State officials, and human rights organizations and affiliations (Foucault, 1975-76). Focusing on the violence, arrest violations, and the accusations of street children as paid thugs, the resituates it's position from merely examining the issues of the street child vis-à-vis the State to using the street child as a means to promote the necessity of State intervention. Consequently, the shift from the pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> focus on managerial governance and structures of NGOs, to the post-January 25<sup>th</sup> focus on traumatic case-by-case studies that result in implementing regulatory apparatuses ultimately and inevitably continue to reinforce the child-adult dichotomy and solidify the necessity for governmentality and biopolitics.

*Reliance on the Adult's Duty, A Focus on Managerial Governance via the State and NGOs*

Prior to January 25<sup>th</sup>, media coverage of street children from these four organizations, published only in English, was limited to a total of seven articles and two documentaries. Of the seven articles, five were published by independent Egyptian news organizations, Egypt Independent with four publications and Daily News Egypt with one and two articles by international news organization Al Jazeera. Regardless of the type of news organization, the articles either briefly mention street children or oversimplify all children into a child category. Directing the attention to the need for State governance via legislations and NGOs via programs and services, these articles propagate the child-adult dichotomy while advocating for managerial governmentality.

The oldest article was written by Shahine (2004) and concentrated predominantly on working children with only three brief mentions of street children in relation to sexual abuse. The

content of the article is important as it emphasizes the vulnerability of children, focusing first on children who must work due to “the country’s struggling economy and the rising cost of living” (Shahine, 2004, para. 16) before branching into a few of the contributing and subsequent consequences such as poor education, dangerous jobs, and sexual abuse. Street children are only mentioned in the sexual abuse section in which Shahine (2004) makes reference to the 2003 Human Rights Watch report about police mistreatment of street children. Again, the focus is on the State and its apparatuses such as its ability to create and enforce legislation. The article concludes by acknowledging NGOs attempts to “better street children’s lives and train them to acquire better learning and vocational skills” (Shahine, 2004, para. 44). However, it still defaults back to reliance on the State as it suggests the lack of enforcement structures when it comes to basic needs such as economic security, education and violations of labor laws and sexual abuse of children.

Further support of Shahine’s (2004) portrayal is two articles written by Semika (2009) and Sadaqa and Gharib (2010). Both articles mention and portray street children as vulnerable members of society who are susceptible to physical and sexual abuse as well as exploitation, but with very little focus or elaboration on the children themselves. Instead, the focal point is on the role and functionality of the State and law. For instance, Semika (2009) briefly mentions the reactions and concerns that arise over the capability of the legal infrastructure to effectively allocate funds and uphold legal actions following violations of children’s rights. The concerns arose after a center located under the Cairo Imbaba Bridge was discovered to be molesting mainly street girls. The focus of Semika’s (2009) article, however, is not so much on the street children themselves, but rather, on the effectiveness of managerial governance. Dedicating only the first paragraph to state the cause of concern – the uncovering of the molestation of street

girls, the rest of the article is dedicated to the adults who speak about their desire to strengthen fund allocations to organizations and NGOs to help protect street girls and the State's ability to utilize and uphold legal prosecution when a violation occurs. The article concludes without addressing or hinting at what actions might be taken with respect to the child, but rather includes only a vague statement stating that the legal action that could be taken to protect the street girls would have to come from either the General Authority for Roads and Bridges or North Giza municipal council. Align with the theme of the CRC, responsibility and blame are on the adults – on the roles they have within social institutions, their ability to incorporate the child into the legal system, and their ability to uphold the law. The role of the child and its effects on the child become missing components as they are reduced into the “child” category.

In a very short article that merely states the Shura Council's approval of an anti-human trafficking legislation, Sadaqa and Gharib (2010) quote council speaker Safwat el-Sherif as he cites the severity of human trafficking by giving two examples of children being forced into prostitution and used by terrorists for suicide attacks or mine field detections. The only mention of street children is in the final sentence where Safwat el-Sherif states, “[a]nd there are a million homeless children on the streets of Egypt that are prone to such abuse” (Sadaqa and Gharib, 2010, para. 04). Although the article is considerably short, the structure of the article gives emphasis and importance to the anti-human trafficking legislation that has been passed as opposed to street children who are only mentioned once at the end of the article. The focus on legislation in the article only seeks to amend symptoms of trafficking rather than seek to resolve the issue from its source. In other words, if street children are more prone to trafficking and abuse, rather than generate legislations that only aim to tackle trafficking and abuse situations, it would be more beneficial to tackle the existence of the street child by asking questions that aim

to understand how, why and what causes a child to be in the streets. As stated in the previous chapters, some of the causes that fuel the existence of street children are poverty, broken homes, domestic violence, and poor quality education. It would then be worthwhile, to reexamine these issues individually as well as collectively, to determine the correlations and the develop methods of combating these issues. In doing so, it might also help children remain off the streets.

Similarly, in an article titled “Children Who Don’t Exist” (2009), a link to Underwood’s (2007) documentary addresses the complications that arise when a child is unregistered with the state and therefore considered nonexistent. Even though the article does not mention street children at all, it is still important to acknowledge the content presented. In Underwood’s (2007) documentary, attention is given to urfi marriages, or verbally contracted marriages that are religiously acceptable but considered unofficial by the State, as it is not registered through writing. Throughout the approximately twenty-three minutes long documentary, the importance and necessity of State registration via birth certificates to pave way to human rights is constantly echoed. The girls and women interviewed such as Hind Al-Hannawi, stress the urgency of changing legislation so that women who suffer from the after effects of urfi marriages may either be able to register their child or seek the courts help to demand a paternity test. Although the article does not mention street children, the content and focus on the State and its apparatuses like the court and legislations, directly aligns with Semika’s (2009) and Sadaqa and Gharib’s (2010) arguments. Furthermore, by not mentioning or considering street children, the article Children who don’t exist (2009) and Underwood (2007) neglected to take into account two potential consequences. First, as suggested by Baron (2007), street children were often the result of illegitimate marriages. Since urfi marriages are not recognized by the State, this could potentially be a site where street children are the consequence. Second, by not addressing other

probable effects of how a child may be unregistered, for instance pregnancy of street girls – children who may already be legally and socially invisible due to missing legal documents such as a birth certificate, the article *Children who don't exist* (2009) and Underwood (2007) further limit the scope of law to address the consequences of society's visible and accepted citizens. In other words, if topic of focus is on “children who do not exist”, why are the only children mentioned and interviewed in Underwood's (2007) documentary the children of people who are already legally registered and socially visible? By limiting the scope of focus, both sources have disregarded the countless numbers of invisible children whom they have asserted they would try and help.

The last three articles published pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> also evoke the need for managerial governmentality; however, instead of focusing on legislation, the articles address NGOs and their work via rehabilitation programs and art exhibitions. For instance, Daily News Egypt (2011) wrote an article that addressed a new rehabilitation program for street children that operated in accordance with social program *Atfal Ad El-Haya* [*Children ready to take on life*] under the NGO Resala. The objective of the rehabilitation program was twofold; first, clinics would provide professional training to volunteers on ways to approach and deal with street children, and second, a focus on rehabilitating the street children in four stages. The first stage was considered the ‘reach out phase’ where volunteers visit places where street children assembled to tell them about a ‘club’ where entertainment would be provided (Rehab program for street children launches psychiatric clinics, 2011). The second stage was focused on studying the street child to identify and work on the problems with the intent to send her or him back to their family. In the third stage, if the child was unable to be reintegrated back into the family, then she or he would be transferred to a temporary residence for duration of six months to a year. During this



period, volunteers would seek to amend relationships with the family for reintegration. If the third stage were still unsuccessful, then the child would be transferred to a permanent residence and be required to attend school or literacy classes until the age of 18. The rehabilitation program also focused on helping the street children overcome their fear in adults and in the society at large with the intent of reintegration (Rehab program for street children launches psychiatric clinics, 2011). Comparable to the analyses of the four phases implemented by Plan Egypt in Chapter Four, the focus is again on managerial governance with the focus of integration; therefore reverting back to the child-adult dichotomy.

Additionally, articles written by El Shabrawy (2010) and Ramadan (2011) focused on NGO photography projects. Both exhibitions were held at the Cairo Opera House; El Shabrawy's (2010) article featured Sarah Khazem's Capturing Neverland Photography Project taken by street children who were living in Hope Village whereas Ramadan's (2011) article featured the Banati Foundation Photography Fundraiser that presented the work of six street girls. As indicated by both writers, the aim of the exhibitions was to capture the world as viewed by street children. In order to do so, the NGOs first taught and trained the street children how to use cameras as stated by one of the street children Yasmine Ahmed, "Sarah taught us not to photograph randomly but to look before taking a picture, to find something that is important to us and photograph it" (El Shabrawy, 2010, para. 4). The street children took a two-week workshop before they were given disposable and digital cameras. Likewise, as expressed by the executive director of the Banati Foundation, Rania Fahmy, the girls took a ten-day course in photography before given cameras. It is important to note the workshop/training session since it serves as the starting point of adult guidance to the children. In thinking of these interactions in parallel with the child-adult dichotomy and the CRC, by teaching and training the child to look for meaning as opposed to

allowing them to take photographs on their own, becomes a particular way of constructing the street child narration. Furthermore, it legitimizes the role and effectiveness of managerial governance in paving the way for street children to engage and self-reflect about the world around them. This agenda is reflected in the photographs themselves via the street children's explanations.

Both articles describe the uniqueness of perspective of the photographs through the children's own explanations of what they saw in their own captured pictures. For instance, Amina Adel, aged 14 at the time of the article explains her reason for taking a picture of an old man in Old Cairo with a cigarette in his mouth and a smile in his eyes, "I took this picture because I found it to be meaningful... I couldn't talk about his rights, or help him with money, so I took a picture of him" (Ramadan, 2011, para. 14). Although the actual photo was not been presented in the article itself, the quote used by Ramadan (2011) is important and symbolic. The way in which Amina chooses to describe the old man could very well be the same description used to describe the status of street children. Pre-January 25<sup>th</sup>, the visibility of the street child in the Egyptian public was practically nil, as articles focused on legalities and ways of implementing governance via legislation and programs. Even in El Shabrawy (2010) and Ramadan's (2011) articles street children are merely used as a new medium to see the world through the usage of cameras. The reasons as to how a child becomes a street child is not mentioned or implied, nor do the articles seek to address the conditions and experiences of the street child. The assumption in using the street children's photography is that these are the street child's own understanding of the world around her or him. However, given that the street child has undergone a prior workshop or training session would suggest otherwise. Thus, Amina's quote is significant, as she captures and describes the picture of the old man smoking a cigarette;

she is simultaneously and unknowingly describes her own status as a street child. A street child is a person under the age of 18 whose rights as a child are complicated given the variable circumstances of hers or his condition. To give her or him money would not necessarily help since it is unclear how the money would be spent. And as a last resort to capture both the old man's existence as well as that of the street child, a picture is taken and utilized accordingly to perpetuate the very system that neglects to take their disposition into consideration.

Equally as significant is Amina's concluding statement of the old man, "He is a person with lots of problems, but he deserves to have his picture taken while he is smiling happily. He deserves to be able to hide his problems behind his smile" (Ramadan, 2011, para. 15). Ironically enough, Amina's comprehension of the old man is also reminiscent of the presence of the street child within the Egyptian public. As the spectators who see the old man's picture would know nothing about him except his captured smile, so too, are the street children who are present at these two photograph exhibitions. Both El Shabrawy (2010) and Ramadan (2011) cover the art exhibitions, but neglect to cover the real story behind the exhibition, the story of the street children themselves and of the street child phenomenon. Thus, in the eyes of the spectator, the children serve the same purpose as the old man in the picture, they are riddled with lots of problems unknown and hidden from public sight, the children are also admired for their uniqueness in viewing the world through photography, yet behind their smiles also lie hidden problems unknown to the spectator. Nevertheless, they still somehow deserve to smile, as the assumption made here is that NGOs have contributed to their overall well-being by providing them programs and services and to some extent, agency. The irony lies in Amina's observations and in the assumptions of the progress of the State and NGOs, as the street child's visibility pre-

January 25<sup>th</sup> is artificially and fragmentally constructed through scatter images and the focus is, yet again, on the necessity and reliance of institutional governance for justice.

In addition to the online news articles published pre-January 25<sup>th</sup>, there are also two documentaries that are worth mentioning, UNICEF Egypt and Ingram's (2004) seven and half minute documentary *Voices from the Street: Testimonies of Cairo's Street Children*, and Rached and Gamal El Din's (2006) sixty-eight minute documentary *Al Banate Dol [These Girls]*. The themes in the articles analyzed earlier, also echo through both documentaries however, what is different is the focus on the street children's testimonies – a technique and quality that is featured in news articles published post-January 25<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, the two documentaries also address the question of agency and justice by asking and visually documenting the street children's interactions with adults and other street children. Although the visual documentations complicate the child-adult dichotomy, the concluding message still supports managerial governmentality through adults by utilizing institutional programs and services such as NGOs.

Featuring mostly street boys, UNICEF Egypt and Ingram's (2004) documentary reiterates many of the concepts that were highlighted by the articles such as the susceptibility to violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and sexual abuse. The difference between the documentary and the accounts of street children in relation to the articles is the focus on the cause and effect. The documentary opens with a street boy's narration about some of the troubles faced, such as violence from other street children and older adults, work engaged in such as begging, bargaining, and collecting trash, and also some of the reasons as to how a child becomes a street child. The street boy cites broken families, stating, "[s]ome parents fight over small things. The kid can't handle these problems so he runs away," (UNICEF Egypt and Ingram, 2004, 01:55). Approximately half way through the documentary, a shift occurs, moving the focus from the

actual streets to a Street Children Camp where more street boys and some street girls are interviewed and asked why they chose to leave their families and live in the streets. The two questions posed are important as it captures a proposed “solution” – necessity of NGOs and institutions, while also shedding light on the child’s agency. The first question asked by the female interviewer is important as the language makes a very deliberate reference to the rights-based discourse, “What rights were you deprived of as children that made you go to the streets?” (UNICEF Egypt and Ingram, 2004, 04:17). Answers from the street children included abuse from parents and step-parents and the inability to do as they pleased – in which the interviewer rephrased as “deprived of the right to play” (UNICEF Egypt and Ingram, 2004, 04:40), a reference to Korczak’s second right, the right of the child to live for today. Scholars and NGOs also reiterate the responses here in news articles and research. The children’s answers also indicate their unhappiness with the lack of agency within the home, thus their resort to the street as expressed by one of the boys, “...being on the street is to be totally free. Freedom to go wherever we want, whenever we want. Nobody can tell us where to go.” (UNICEF Egypt and Ingram, S., 2004, 05:18). However, the message of the documentary still favors the reliance of managerial governance via NGOs. In the transition from documenting the street to the Street Children Camp, the camera introduces the camp by showing the boys engaging in pottery with one of boys stating, that upon ending up in the streets, “Often they’ll end up at a shelter. There you can look to the future because family life is over. Kids lose hope but thankfully – there they can get help” (UNICEF Egypt and Ingram, 2004, 04:53). The transition in image coupled with the statement reinforces the need and reliance of adults to provide and care for the well-being of the child. This need and reliance is also reiterated in Rached and Gamal El Din’s (2006) documentary, *Al Banate Dol*, which features the lives and stories of street girls.

Rached and Gamal El Din's (2006) production of *Al Banate Dol* [*These Girls*] features the lives and stories of a band of street girls who live together and encounter drug abuse, pregnancy and motherhood, prostitution, and rape on the streets. Reiterating some of the themes addressed in UNICEF Egypt and Ingram's (2004) documentary as well as those addressed in the news articles, Rached and Gamal El Din's (2006) goes further by emphasizing the types of relationships developed and the agency of the girls on the street. For instance, one of the main girls featured is a girl whose name is Fatma, but prefers to be called by the name Tata. She explains her role in the street as being strong and protective for both herself and of the family she has created on the street. Throughout the documentary, Tata can be seen defending herself against street boys or adults, often shouting over them with threats whilst pushing them away from her with her hands, protecting other street girls such as Mariam and Iman along with her children against other street children and adults, as well as antagonizing other street girls when she feels they are in the wrong. She also gives accounts of mouthing back to police officers when they antagonize her. Similarly, one of the street boys also stated his respect and love for Tata because of her courage to help him when he was put in the trunk of a police vehicle. Tata also assumes the role of a parent as seen approximately ten minutes into the documentary when Tata describes protecting Abeer when her father came to her with a knife because of her pregnancy, which was a result from rape from a group of street boys. Tata defends Abeer by lying that her brother was the one who slept with her and asked whether he would want to see his daughter abused or with a marriage contract; she later threatened him with a razor to drive Abeer's father away.

The various portrayals of Tata throughout the documentary display her role not only as a street child, but also as a person who takes an active role in her own life and in others. In doing

so, Tata has taken on the role of being a “parent” with the other street girls and their children. Contrary to Tata’s assumed role as an “adult”, there are also moments in the film when she breaks down in front of the cameras and confesses her desire to stop sniffing glue, taking pills and to leave the streets and when she expresses her sadness about the arrest of Rageb, a fellow street boy she feels close to (Rached and Gamal El Din, 2006). When her concerns are verbalized, another street girl Afaf takes on the “parent” role by consoling and supporting her, later stating, “As long as we’re with you, don’t be afraid!” (Rached and Gamal El Din, 2006, 58:14). This is also supported by one of the unnamed girl’s testimony when she states, “You can’t lock it all in your heart until you die! You have to talk. People are not all alike. That’s all I can say. If they were, everything would be all right. We wouldn’t have been arrested, or treated badly” (Rached and Gamal El Din, 2006, 53:59). The roles of street children both as a child and adult are fluid and constantly changing according to the situation. Sometimes they take on the role of an “adult” and protector for themselves as well as for others, whereas other times they require the need and care from another. However, it is in this process that they are also self-reflective and engaged in a self-dialogue and with those around them who are in the same situation. This type of engagement is further complicated when a street girl becomes pregnant like in the case of Abeer in which the focus shifts to the State.

Although Abeer’s age is not disclosed in the documentary, the spectator is informed that she became pregnant after being raped by a group of street boys and that her father has tried in the past, to come after her with a knife. Abeer has been protected by Tata and throughout the course of the documentary she speaks with Hend, the facility manager of El Malek El Saleh Reception Center (MSRC) who, as elaborated in Chapter Four, is a well-known figure amongst street girls for her work and outreach. It is important to take into consideration, that even in

Rached and Gamal El Din's (2006) documentary of the street children in their day-to-day life, there is still an undertone of the need for managerial governance. In the captured moments of Abeer and Hend's communications, Hend engages Abeer by asking about her unborn child such as whether or not she knows who the father is? If she does not know who the father is how will she acquire a birth certificate for her child? If she cannot acquire a birth certificate for her child, how will she deal with her father? Will she continue to avoid him and for how long does she think she can sustain the avoidance? The questions that Hend asks have a particular type of insinuation with regards to the State. Without legal documentation, her child would be considered nonexistent and unprotected by the State. Yet at the same time, a child who is already living in the street is already to some extent nonexistent and unprotected.

The focus on the State and legislation reinforce the acceptance and need for managerial governance as a means to eliminate problems. Likewise, it also suggests the necessity for and the duty of adults to diagnose and fix the problems since drafting and negotiation of legislation occurs between adults not adults and children, making the roles of the child as well as the effects on the child missing components. All children are then reduced into a single category of "child" who is susceptible to sexual abuse and violence due to various reasons such as economic instability, increased cost of living, and family instability and would therefore, require the protection of adults via State and institutional governance. However, in the articles and documentaries examined here, the effects of these instabilities on the child her or himself has not been completely analyzed but rather reduced to the single category of "child". Furthermore, the child's agency has also been removed and taken as being an after effect or a mere reaction of having experienced instability and not an active decision or choice taken by the child, which is not necessarily the case as expressed through the documentaries when both girls and boys choose



to leave or remain in the street. Additionally, if managerial governmentality is the focus, then by default through the implications I have just suggested, the adults are the ones who would be responsible. Nevertheless, in each of the articles addressed thus far, no consequences were documented in instances where a violation occurred or was identified; only a continual implication of the need for more legislations and enforcement and institutional programs and services are addressed. By oversimplifying the child category whilst simultaneously relying but neglecting to enforce the responsibility of adults, one would have to question whether or not adopting the child-adult dichotomy should be the only option and is managerial governmentality enough? It is important to keep these questions in mind as the ramifications in the pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> period go beyond the dichotomy and into the legitimization of biopolitics post-January 25<sup>th</sup>.

*Post-January 25<sup>th</sup>: Utilizing Traumatic Case-by-Case Accounts to Propagate Biopolitics*

As the pre-January 25<sup>th</sup> media focused on managerial governmentality, post-January 25<sup>th</sup> delivered stories that fixated on the number of street children that were arrested or subjected to violence and torture during and after the initial revolution and causation of the street child category. The consequences of these stories were then used to propagate State intervention and the necessity of surveillance and regulation of all citizens. Prior to January 25<sup>th</sup> a total of seven articles were published that had mentioned the phrase “street child(ren)” or “children on the street” whereas a total of thirty-one articles were published post-January 25<sup>th</sup> that not only mentioned the phrases “street child(ren)” or “children in the street” but they also served a stepping stone to bring more awareness into who these children are within the Egyptian society. The articles published invoked a tone of sympathy and concern as the street child suddenly became visible to the Egyptian public because of their participation in Tahrir Square during the

eighteen days. This is supported by colleague and activist Shaza Abdel-Lateef statement, “Street children were used in Tahrir to protect the tents. This was my first time to interact with them and the first time I realized their presence” (personal communication, April 6, 2013). It is also through their participation in Tahrir Square that the types of challenges faced by the street children are also brought to the surface. Since the purpose of this thesis is not to examine every published story of how the street child came into existence in the Egyptian public, this section seeks to highlight some of the main challenges addressed with relation to street children during this period and the reactions of the Egyptian public to these challenges. With strong emphases on the obligation of the State to enforce children’s rights, the challenges faced by the street children become a vital piece of the equation to promote biopolitics of all members of society for the new Egypt.

In an article written by Wander (2011), approximately a month after January 25, 2011, the street child’s presence is acknowledged with respect to the revolution through quantifying the number of street children in Cairo at approximately 50,000. Drawing on the protestors call for “national solidarity of standing up for their rights [and] taking control of their destiny” (Wander, 2011, para. 10), the article invokes the need to incorporate all members of society, including those who were invisible. The key phrase in his article is the need to incorporate all members of society. With the exclusion of street children from society because of the stigmatization surrounding their existence, and typically the lack of official government issued identification papers such as birth certificates, the media constantly repeated the inefficiency and inability to determine the official number of street children who participated, were arrested, or killed during and post January 25<sup>th</sup>. Reporters gave various estimations from organizations that work with street children. For instance, the article 383 Egyptian children detained in last 2 months: Rights

group (2013) took a statement from the Egyptian Coalition on Children's Rights that estimated a total number of detained children by the interior ministry to be at 383 since the second anniversary of January 25<sup>th</sup> with the breakdown being 157 detained children during January 24<sup>th</sup> and February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and another 226 arrested during February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013; similarly, Charbel (2013), Bakr (2013), Sanchez (2013), El-Behairy (2013) focus on the number of arrests and on the role of the street children in ongoing protests and riots that occur in the protests after January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The approximations are important as each article also addressed other related factors such as blame and responsibility, but most importantly agency and justice.

If street children partook in the riots and protests, should they be held accountable and what is the role of the society and State? In contemplating this question, Charbel (2013) complicates the child-adult dichotomy by quoting children's rights activist Ghada Shahbender, "These children tend to be alienated from society, [...] adding that 'minors who witness violence – especially in cases where they have seen their friends injured or killed in clashes – seek retribution and justice. If this is not provided, these children may seek retribution and the reclamation of their rights with their own hands'" (para. 16). Shahbender's quote poses an interesting question against the concepts of agency and justice, especially in relation to the child-adult dichotomy. If one accepts the assumptions of the child-adult dichotomy, that the child is incomplete and in the process of *becoming* the adult, or the complete *being*, then the responsibility and duty of insuring the child an environment and room to develop into an adult is on the adult. Similarly, it assumes that the child does not have or is incapable of assuming agency. But what if the adult does not fulfill the assumed obligations in a satisfactory manner? In Shahbender's statement, the child has become an active agent and assumed various roles in hers or his own agency; for instance, seeking retribution and justice when the reliance on State for

retribution and justice unavailable. The questions of agency become more complicated when accusations arise in whether or not street children have been paid to incite violence.

Heavily circulated in the media were skepticism and questions regarding the legitimacy of the accusations of street children being paid to start violence. Furthermore, examinations of the treatment of these minors arose when they were arrested. For instance, articles written by Mohsen (2011) and Marroushi (2011) posed questions that challenged the likelihood of paying street children to incite violence as well as who is to blame. In both articles accusations were made based on speculations rather than substantive evidence. The two articles are important as they challenge and bring to light the street child's agency. Marroushi (2011) does not deny the possibility that street children may be paid given their living conditions however, she also suggests based on interviews with various lawyers and representatives from international organizations, that some of the children also choose to be on the front lines for personal reasons such as not wanting to feeling oppressed when they grow up and seeing other friends hurt and desiring retribution – the same message asserted by Charbel (2013). However, regardless of the validity of the accusations, both Marroushi (2011) and Mohsen (2011) link the blame to the inefficiency of the State in upholding what they perceive to be sound legislation (e.g. Child Law 1996 and its 2008 Amendments). This assessment and conclusion is not limited to Marroushi (2011) and Mohsen (2011), rather both pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup> media coverage echo the same belief. Citing statements made by representatives and data compiled by international organizations and NGOs, the consensus of the media reporters who mention the street child all reiterate the need for governmental and institutional change. For example, Marroushi (2011) and Mohsen's (2011) inquiry of the allocation of funds to the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the role of the military and SCAF, both reporters argue for a reevaluation and

improvement of the role of the State. Mohsen (2011) goes further by quoting Mohamed Moneib, director of the Arab Center for Democracy and Human Rights in stating that the involvement of children could “serve to escalate the violence and feelings of resentment between the people and the military” (para. 7) and thus the necessity to restructure State governance and reinforcement of punishment for violations.

Although they question the validity of the state and its apparatuses to determine accurate figures such as the number of street children living in Egypt, of those who participated in the clashes, or even the allocation of funds and reinforcement of violations, they all default into accepting the child-adult dichotomy. They argue that even if street children are active agents, it is ultimately the State’s responsibility to govern and determine justice. The attention is then situated on the victimization of street children by both the State and members of society and an objective to rectify the victimization by establishing effective ways of incorporating the street child into the system and by surveillance and governance of potential failed institutions such as deterioration of family structures, usage of child labor, and poor education. Take for instance the article titled Rights activists condemn violence against children during clashes (2011) that seeks to address how the State, during the time of the demonstration, viewed and treated its citizens as “enemies of the state” (para. 3). The article condemns the use of violence, yet it is interesting that it quotes UNICEF’s urge to “authorities and all other parties to respect fully the rights of children and protect them in accordance with Egyptian and international humanitarian and human rights law” (Rights activists condemn violence against children during clashes, 2011, para. 7). The contradiction between critiquing governmentality and then the immediate statement for the need of regulation draws forth an unnerving question; do we need to be governed in order to have justice?

Although the CRC seeks to secure the multitude of children's rights as mentioned throughout this thesis and was ratified by Egypt in 1990, the ultimate outcome of the legislations are still rooted in the child-adult dichotomy as it delegates the responsibility of children to the adults and State. The dichotomy is clearly depicted through the usage of language whether in legislation, media, or documentaries. Similarly, as elaborated in Chapter Four, the various programs and services provided by Plan Egypt that focus on integration seeks to embed the child back into the system of governance. By neglecting to view the decisions taken by street children such as Sarah and Rasha, as agency, the accepted assumption defaults back to the child-adult dichotomy in that the child is merely an incomplete being who is in the process of *becoming* the complete *being* or adult. With this belief, the street children's interactions are reduced to being reactions to the negligence of adults. Ironically enough, the solution is still dependent on the responsibility and interference of the adult but through the infrastructure of the State, which is clearly depicted in the post-January 25<sup>th</sup> media article with the concluding result as the need for governmentality of the state and a stricter biopolitical agenda.

The need for managerial governance and biopolitics is not reserved to the post-January 25<sup>th</sup> Egyptian public. In Chapter Four, in my analyses of the architecture of the Banati Shelter (BaS) as being two separated circular housing facilities – one for girls and the other for boys, conjoined in the middle by yet another circular hall way, the facility is reminiscent of Foucault's (1977) panopticon. What is suggested by the construction of the buildings is the need for the adult to govern and regulate the child through surveillance. If this is a manifestation of children's rights, then what does this suggest about other dichotomous groupings such as woman and man, abled and disabled, white and black?

## **Child and Adult, Women and Men, Us and Them: Can We Move Beyond Dichotomies and into “Human Beings”?**

In questioning the philosophical implications of the child and adult, I tried to complicate the idea of fully utilizing a dichotomy without critical engagement. In Chapter Two<sup>8</sup>, I choose to elaborate on one of the founder’s of children’s right, Korczak’s three fundamental rights of the child. In doing so, I presented an alternative way of understanding the conceptual implications of a child and adult by thinking through Korczak’s (1992b, 2001) three fundamental rights in relation with his child orphanage, *Dom Sierot*. Coupled with Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) understanding of the link between the individual and the social in terms of a series of lines or forces, I philosophically equated the “child” and “adult” into *being-becomings* whom continue to grow and learn throughout the course of hers or his lifetime as opposed to one who is incomplete, or in the process of *becoming* a full mature *being*. In Chapter Three<sup>9</sup> I tried to constructively criticized and engaged with the CRC and its implementation into Egypt’s national law via the 1996 Child Law and the 2008 Amendments. By engaging the human rights nomenclature, I tried to illuminate on the ways in which law is incomplete and circular. Rooted in the rights-based discourse, the CRC ultimately perpetuates the child-adult dichotomy and by doing so, it inevitably creates the necessity and dependency on adults to define, deliver and uphold justice whilst simultaneously removing the child’s agency from the equation. In Chapter Four<sup>10</sup>, I choose to examine programs and services offered by Plan Egypt and it’s partners the El-Malek El-Saleh Reception Center (MSRC) and the Banati Shelter (BaS).

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter Two, page 19

<sup>9</sup> Chapter Three, page 31

<sup>10</sup> Chapter Four, page 46

Throughout the chapters of this thesis, I have tried to complicate the child-adult dichotomy, and even though these complications were addressed and debated in the published news articles and documentaries pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup>, I have argued that programs and services provided by NGOs and Plan Egypt address and seek to alleviate the problematic street child category, they still operate under and enforce a rights-based discourse. Despite efforts to promote justice and agency via social, economic, political, and child participation, programs and services fail to move beyond the child and adult dichotomy. As a result, efforts taken normalize the dichotomous power relations between the child and adult via surveillance and governmentality, while simultaneously marketing its efforts as being pro child agency (e.g. child participation and decision making). What is created and reproduced is an endless cycle of the child-adult dichotomy where both the solution and problem originates. By assuming that the child has no agency because of hers or his lack of emotional or psychological maturity due to age, is to assume that the child does not engage, experience or reflect with the world. If a child is always in the state of *becoming* the adult or *being*, then that is to assume the adult is static or stable. Both the child and adult make mistakes, similarly so, both experience, engage, act and react accordingly to the experiences they encounter. If one maintains that the child-adult dichotomy is undeniable, then what about the other dichotomies such as those regarding gender and race?

In conclusion, what I hope this thesis offers is a starting point to question what we may think we already understand and know. The scope of this thesis is limited as further research into the manifestations of dichotomies such as the child-adult dichotomy can be made. For instance, examining the ways in which symbols are used to propagate a certain type agenda that either favors or disfavors the child and adult and its implication on agency and justice; such as the



portray of child soldiers. Additionally, examining the ways in which NGOs utilize language and symbols when advertising and seeking funds and how “success” of a program is measured. Just how successful are integration policies? What does it mean to teach a child a technical skill so that she or he may be reintegrated into the society as a contributing member? It would be beneficial to conduct cross-cultural studies and comparisons on the meaning and function of the ‘street’. In the instances where street children do not want to be removed from the street, what are the symbolic meanings and functions of the street? In Chapter Four, accounts from Rasha suggested that the street could potentially be a place where concepts of safety can be introduced. Her desire to return to the street to create a shelter or home, suggests how the views of the street differ according to how an individual interacts with the street. In thinking through this, one could also ask, is the street gendered? In other words, are there certain locations, business establishments, and areas of the street off limits to girls or boys entirely or for certain durations? In Egypt, given the post-January 25<sup>th</sup> events, it would be beneficial to further investigate how street children interact with Tahrir Square. As suggested by the news articles covered in this thesis, street children pre- and post-January 25<sup>th</sup> do frequent Tahrir Square and their roles in the Square are heavily debated upon.

Similarly, research on physical spatial constructions of other NGOs both within Egypt and abroad might shed insight as to whether the architecture of shelters and reception centers are deliberately structured to enhance surveillance and governance over individuals. If these buildings are deliberately structured to resemble Foucault’s panopticon as a means to maximize surveillance over individuals who utilize the facility, then future research might be able to shed light on the effects of physical spatial constructions and the success of integration programs via socialization, education, and behavioral improvements. It would also be interesting to see

whether or not this has an effect on gender with respect to successful integration. Since the MSRC and BaS works predominately with female street children, a lingering question remains, where do the boys go and what happens to them after they leave?

Future studies on NGOs might consider developing ways of better communication and continuous dialogue amongst other local NGOs. For instance, although Plan Egypt collaborates and funds other NGOs when dealing with street child, there are also many other NGOs present in Cairo, that work with street children. If a continuous dialogue was established and maintained, there might be a better chance at establishing an approximate number of current street children within the Cairo area, the types of programs and services provided, the strengths and areas of improvements of these programs and services, and how they might work collaboratively towards change (e.g. policy, social, media, and familial). Potential results could include more visibility for the public, decrease in stigmatization, and an increase in community involvement. Additionally, NGOs might also be able to conduct longitudinal studies of individual street child cases to determine whether or not programs and services provided have a positive, negative or neutral long-term effect.

In thinking through these dichotomies, whether it's via categories of child-adult, woman-man, female-male, disabled-abled, I wonder if it's possible to go beyond the dichotomies and categories and simply into "human beings"?

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